



1975

Immediate Experience and the Problem of Expression: A Study in the Philosophy of Bergson

Jeanne Priley McLean
Loyola University Chicago

Recommended Citation

McLean, Jeanne Priley, "Immediate Experience and the Problem of Expression: A Study in the Philosophy of Bergson" (1975).
Dissertations. Paper 1569.
http://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/1569

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/).
Copyright © 1975 Jeanne Priley McLean

IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE AND THE PROBLEM OF EXPRESSION

A STUDY IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF BERGSON

by

Jeanne Priley McLean

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

June

1975

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to the Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation for the research fellowship during the 1972-73 academic year which greatly facilitated the work of the dissertation.

My appreciation also to Professor John F. Bannan for his direction in this project, and for the guidance and encouragement which he consistently offered throughout my graduate studies. Finally, I would like to thank Professors Robert Barry and Thomas Wren for their assistance in the final stages of the dissertation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ii
INTRODUCTION	1
 Chapter	
I. METAPHYSICAL FOUNDATIONS OF BERGSON'S EPISTEMOLOGY	5
Duration	6
Duration of Consciousness	16
Duration of the External World	20
Epistemological Implications of Bergson's Metaphysics	33
II. THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE: INTELLECT AND INTUITION. .	36
The Problems of Intellectual Analysis	38
Intuition: An Alternative to the Intellect . .	52
III. FLUID FORMS OF EXPRESSION: LANGUAGE, MUSIC AND ART	61
Language	64
Comparison View	68
Interaction View	75
Diaphoric View	80
Music	91
Program Music	95
Absolute Music	98
Art	103
IV. CONCLUSION: THE CHALLENGE TO PHILOSOPHY	117
Intuition as Philosophic Method	119
New Directions for Philosophic Discourse . . .	130
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	138

INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of Henri Bergson is primarily of historical importance today. Curiously, the man who captivated academic and popular audiences in France at the turn of the century now, only forty years after the publication of his last major work, elicits the serious attention of only a handful of scholars. However dramatic and forceful his impact might have been, it seems in retrospect indeed short-lived.

Since Bergson so well understood that evolutionary progress demands the continuous overcoming of old forms and the creation of new, he would have been the last to lament the fact that much of his work has been supplanted by more advanced research and evidence. Quite more disturbing, however, would have been the realization that his philosophy may have well been superseded before it was fully understood. The intent of this paper is to take up at least one of the issues which is relatively unexplored in the history of Bergsonian research and, by situating it within the framework of his broader philosophical concerns, to renew an appreciation of Bergson's work and to underscore his historical importance as an early formulator of contemporary questions.

The problem of expression, which is the focus of the present study, arises within the context of Bergson's epistemological distinction between intellect and intuition. His theory of knowledge, in turn, is rooted in his metaphysics of duration. This vital interdependency of ideas requires an elucidation of Bergson's duration theory before proceeding to questions of knowledge and expression. Chapter I, therefore, reviews Bergson's metaphysics of duration in order to justify and explain its application to consciousness and the external world.

Within the context of an enduring world, there are two distinct ways in which the mind knows its objects. First of all, the intellect, which seeks a stable basis for action, employs static conceptual representations to immobilize the continuously moving and changing durée. Intuition, on the other hand, with no practical interest, dispenses with symbols and seeks a pure, immediate grasp of duration as duration. This epistemological distinction between intellectual and intuitive modes of knowing is the topic of Chapter II.

The question inevitably arises, however, as to what forms of expression, if any, can adequately accommodate our intuitive apprehensions. When Bergson proposes that intuition dispense with symbols, does this fact imply that immediate experience is wholly inexpressible and incapable of being communicated? Chapter III takes up this problem and

interprets Bergson's suggestion that the mind "create supple, mobile, almost fluid representations, always ready to mold themselves on the fleeting forms of intuition." Bergson will further suggest that there are at least three forms of human expression, namely language, music, and art, which are capable of fluid representation and hence more accurate expression of the universal durée.

A final consideration is Bergson's recommendation that philosophy, particularly metaphysics, employ the intuitive method. If philosophy proceeds by intuition and adopts the fluid forms of expression appropriate to it, does it thereby forfeit its cherished precision and rigor? Chapter IV explores the implications of Bergson's view for philosophical discourse and method.

At the outset of this paper, it should be carefully noted that Bergson's philosophy of expression is a topic which demands the synthesizing of fragmentary texts and some venturesome interpretation in order to clarify and complete their meaning. Bergson's theory of expression, to some extent explicitly developed in his writings and to some extent contributed by an illustration and elaboration of his texts, is more susceptible to misinterpretation than it would be if it involved textual exposition alone. But the project also has a more positive side. However difficult the reconstruction of Bergson's position might be, it is urged upon us by the fact that some of his most provocative and

illuminating ideas are presented in embryonic form. His philosophy of expression, and in particular his notion of fluid representation, are foremost among those ideas.

CHAPTER I

METAPHYSICAL FOUNDATIONS OF BERGSON'S EPISTEMOLOGY

Bergson's metaphysics and epistemology are inseparable. The justification of his metaphysics of duration depends largely on the validity of his theory of intuition; in turn, his basic distinction between intellectual and intuitive knowing is an outgrowth of the metaphysical assumption that reality is duration. This radical interdependency of metaphysical and epistemological concerns makes imperative a discussion of the salient features of Bergson's duration prior to an analysis of his theory of knowledge. The problem of expression, rooted as it is in Bergson's epistemology, cannot be defined or explicated until the broader framework of his metaphysics is before us. Clearly, the organic character of Bergson's thought demands such a detour.

The purpose of the present chapter is to offer a descriptive analysis of the metaphysical principle of duration, showing its earliest use in reference to consciousness and its subsequent extension to include the external world. This examination of the duration theory, in addition to showing the defensibility of his metaphysics, will also enable us to formulate the problems of knowledge and

expression to which it gives rise.

DURATION

Oddly enough, duration did not always enjoy the status of a metaphysical principle in Bergson's philosophy. Although the concept of duration was introduced in Bergson's earliest work Time and Free Will (1889), it was discussed principally as a feature of consciousness with no clear application to the external world.¹ The first indication that Bergson was working toward a theory of the duration of matter appeared in Chapter IV of Matter and Memory (1896).² Although duration received explicit formulation as a metaphysical principle as early as 1902 in Introduction to Metaphysics, the problem of proving the duration of matter

¹Although Bergson does make reference to the external world in Time and Free Will, it is always with a view to contrasting it with conscious duration. His consistent aim is to show that duration only describes consciousness, since it is immaterial, unextended and non-spatial, whereas it does not describe matter which is extended and spatial with all that implies. It is therefore curious that Milic Capek maintains that as early as Bergson's Essai the problem of psychological time begins to merge with the problem of duration in general. Milic Capek, Bergson and Modern Physics, Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science, Vol. VII (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel, 1971), p. 89.

²Prior to Chapter IV Bergson does make two brief allusions to the fact that matter, particularly the body, is in process of duration. Henri Bergson, Matter and Memory, trans. by Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1959), pp. 178, 192. This theory is not thoroughly nor systematically developed, however, until the final chapter.

continued to preoccupy Bergson throughout Duration and Simultaneity (1922) and The Creative Mind (1934). Since duration achieved its metaphysical stature only gradually as Bergson's thesis advanced, it is necessary to trace the two-fold development of the duration of consciousness and the external world in order to arrive at its essential meaning.

Prior to this discussion, however, let us review the main lines of the general theory of duration. Bergson consistently argues that there are two distinct ways in which the mind can conceive of time. On the one hand, time can be regarded as a "pure duration," a temporal flow entirely free of space; on the other hand, it can be considered a homogeneous or "spatialized" time, a temporality defined according to spatial categories and made dangerously analogous to space itself.³ This contrast invites analysis

³Bergson's distinction between the two temporalities is most explicit in the following texts: Time and Free Will, trans. by F. L. Pogson, Harper Torchbooks (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), pp. 99-100, 137-39; Matter and Memory, pp. 272-73; Creative Evolution, trans. by Arthur Mitchell, The Modern Library (New York: Random House, 1944), pp. 366-70; Duration and Simultaneity, trans. by Leon Jacobson, The Library of Liberal Arts (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1965), pp. 49-51; The Creative Mind (Totowa, N.J.: Littlefield, Adams and Co., 1970), pp. 12-13, 124. A lucid presentation of these two views of time and a discussion of them in terms of modern physics is contained in an article by Satoshi Watanabe, "The Concept of Time in Modern Physics and Bergson's Pure Duration" in Bergson and the Evolution of Physics, ed. by P. A. Gunter (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1969), pp. 62-76. Unquestionably the most substantial and extensive treatment of the topic is found in two books by Milic Capek: Bergson and Modern Physics and The Philosophical Impact of Contemporary Physics (Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1961).

of the concepts of space, homogeneous time and pure duration. We will proceed, first of all, by defining "space" which is the pivotal concept in Bergson's distinction of the two temporalities; secondly, by characterizing that form of temporality which is an admixture of space and time and, as such, is an unfortunate and distortive representation of duration; and finally, by describing pure duration or "real time," which is Bergson's key metaphysical principle.

Bergson defines space quite simply as "an empty homogeneous medium," homogeneity consisting in "the absence of every quality."⁴ There are several consequences of this assumption. First of all, in space one distinguishes objects not on the basis of their qualitative differences—for space assumes the complete absence of quality—but on the basis of the positions of the objects relative to one another. In order to differentiate in this manner, the objects must be present simultaneously.⁵ It is then the spatial intervals between the simultaneously existing objects that make possible discrimination among them, even if the objects in question

⁴Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 95, 98, 120-21.

⁵This concept of the simultaneous presence of objects in space is a subtle intrusion of time into the consideration of space. Appreciating that simultaneity fuses space and time, Bergson says that "the connecting link between these two terms, space and duration, is simultaneity, which might be defined as the intersection of time and space." Time and Free Will, p. 110.

are qualitatively undifferentiated or identical in nature.⁶ A necessary condition for differentiating coexistent objects is the perception of them as circumscribed or spatially delimited in themselves and separated by a spatial interval from other objects. These spatial intervals can be measured and infinitely divided;⁷ the objects which they separate can, by virtue of their externality, be counted.⁸ Thus space introduces quantity into the world of objects and enables us to perceive them "all at once" as a multiplicity of discrete units in juxtaposition to one another.⁹ In summary, space is an empty, homogeneous medium in which simultaneously existing objects become separated, differentiated, juxtaposed and enumerated. So described, space accounts at least in part for the relations among objects in the material world.

⁶"Space is what enables us to distinguish a number of identical and simultaneous sensations from one another; it is thus a principle of differentiation other than that of qualitative differentiation, and consequently it is a reality with no quality . . . because we afterwards interpret this difference of quality as a difference of situation, it follows that we must have a clear idea of a homogeneous medium, i.e., of a simultaneity of terms which, although identical in quality, are yet distinct from one another." (Time and Free Will, p. 95)

⁷Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 246-53, 273, 290; Creative Evolution, pp. 335-36.

⁸Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 78-79, 85, 87, 99; Creative Evolution, pp. 280-81.

⁹Time and Free Will, pp. 120-21, 162-63; Duration and Simultaneity, p. 60.

Bergson severely criticizes the theory of time advanced by classical physicists and generally accepted by common sense, for surreptitiously introducing space into the temporal process.¹⁰ Homogeneous time is nothing but the projection of time into space, with the result that we unwittingly fall back upon space and really give up time.¹¹ Bergson argues that when the temporal process is regarded as a one-dimensional homogeneous medium, it must be "given all at once," which amounts to saying that we abstract it from duration.¹² It is "given all at once" in the sense that it is viewed as a totality, a completed process in which the past and future coexist with the present, and in which discrete events appear in the order of their succession. In isolating these successive states, we have in

¹⁰Classical physics developed from the Newtonian mechanics. It persisted through the nineteenth century generally evolving toward a corpuscular-kinetic scheme in which the universe was regarded as "an enormous aggregate of bits of homogeneous material whose quantity remained constant while the spatial distribution was continuously changing according to the immutable laws of mechanics." (Capek, The Philosophical Impact of Contemporary Physics, p. 6) The emergence of the theory of relativity and quantum mechanics in the early part of this century necessitated radical changes in the concept of space, time, motion, and matter and formed the foundation of modern physics. The philosophical import of this contrast between classical and modern physics is the topic of Capek's book.

¹¹Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 98. Cf. pp. 99, 101; Duration and Simultaneity, pp. 52-53.

¹²Time and Free Will, p. 98.

effect demarcated moments in time, separated them by temporal intervals, and externalized them in relation to one another. Thus we have created a series of static units which can be counted and quantified like objects in space.¹³ Furthermore, placing these units in succession introduces order, and ordering requires that we first distinguish and compare the terms ordered.

Hence we must perceive them as multiple, simultaneous and distinct; in a word we set them side by side, and if we introduce an order in what is successive, the reason is that succession is converted into simultaneity and is projected into space.¹⁴

In making an order of succession, we are led to the linear model and its implicit spatiality. When time is represented as a line extended in space, its duration is marked by a series of individual instants strung along the continuum.¹⁵ This linear representation renders homogeneous time as infinitely divisible as space.¹⁶ In order to conceive time as a continuum, we must have before us, all at once,

¹³Time and Free Will, pp. 104-05, 123-24; Introduction to Metaphysics, trans. by T. E. Hulme, The Library of Liberal Arts (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1955), pp. 43-44; Duration and Simultaneity, pp. 49-51; Creative Mind, p. 12.

¹⁴Time and Free Will, p. 102.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 103, 181-82, 237; Creative Evolution, pp. 335-39; Duration and Simultaneity, pp. 50-51, 53, 66; Creative Mind, p. 12.

¹⁶See n. 8.

the past, present and future. When they are mapped out as discrete points along a line, they become simultaneous. Duration is eclipsed, for past, present and future do not unfold but are already given. The uninterrupted and continuous process of time is reduced to a string of simultaneities, and its passage is marked by advancing from one static point to the next. Therefore, the major consequence of viewing time as a homogeneous medium is that it acquires all the characteristics that homogeneity implies, and becomes scarcely distinguishable from space itself. Homogeneous time, as the movement through a linear succession of discrete, static instants, has forfeited its essential temporality and has more resemblance to space than to any enduring process.

In order to correct this misconception of time, Bergson introduces the notion of "real time" or pure duration, a temporality entirely free of space and all that its homogeneity entails. Its essential features are described in the following passage in which Bergson draws an analogy between pure duration and a musical tune.¹⁷ Although strictly speaking music is a succession of notes,

Might it not be said that, even if these notes succeed one another, yet we perceive them in one another, and that their totality may be compared to a living being whose parts, although distinct, permeate one another . . .

¹⁷The full implications of Bergson's frequent use of music as an analogue will be discussed in Chapter III.

We can thus conceive of succession without distinction, and think of it as a mutual penetration, an interconnection and organization of elements, each one of which represents the whole, and cannot be distinguished or isolated from it except by abstract thought. Such is the account of duration which would be given by a being . . . who had no idea of space.¹⁸

The contrast with homogeneous time is clear. The unity of duration is organic; it resides in the continuity of the process itself and not in the proximity in space or juxtaposition along a continuum of discrete elements. The enduring process gradually unfolds and thereby "hinders everything from being given 'all at once.'"¹⁹ Just as in a melody, there is no clear definition of the point where one note ends and another begins, so in duration one moment flows into the next, resulting in a "mutual penetration" of elements, a "succession without distinction."²⁰ Since duration is a thoroughly continuous and indivisible process, there are no isolable "states," no discrete "befores and afters," no simultaneous instants.²¹ Rather the past-flows-into-the-

¹⁸Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 100-01. Italics mine.

¹⁹Bergson, Creative Mind, p. 93.

²⁰Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 107, 110, 237; Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 26-27.

²¹Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 272; Creative Mind, pp. 142-50, 155.

present-becoming-future with no halts and no clear demarcation of intervals.²²

One effect of this radical continuity is that time is essentially cumulative.²³ Each "moment" or event carries with it what preceded and anticipates whatever follows. With this prolongation of each "moment" into the next, the past survives in the present and moves with it into the future. Since duration is cumulative, each successive moment, preceded by a more amplified past, is an "uninterrupted upsurge of novelty."²⁴ The "succession" of moments is unrepeatable, and the entire process is irreversible.²⁵

²²Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 26; Mind-Energy, trans. by H. W. Carr (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1920), p. 39; Creative Mind, pp. 16, 93, 296-97. Bergson's use of the term "duration" to designate the continuous movement of time contrasts sharply with another conventional usage in which "duration" refers to what is lasting or permanent, and therefore atemporal. J. J. C. Smart, in a recent article on "Time" (The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 1st ed., VIII, 126-34), is critical of the meaning Bergson intends because it is "heavily infected with the myth of passage."

²³Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 209; Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 26, 40; Creative Evolution, pp. 7-10, 20, 52-53, 393; Mind-Energy, pp. 62-72; Duration and Simultaneity, pp. 48-49; Creative Mind, p. 153.

²⁴Bergson, Creative Mind, p. 18.

²⁵Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 8-9, 52, 91-93, 105, 237-38, 369-70; Creative Mind, pp. 18-19, 91-106. For an extended discussion of the compatibility of continuity and novelty in Bergson's *durée*, see the article by Guy LaFrance, "Continuite et absolue nouveaute dans la durée bergsonienne," Dialogue, VII (1968-69), pp. 94-101.

If each moment is non-identical with every other, then duration is a process of continuous change and is fundamentally heterogeneous.²⁶ In order to ensure the continuity of duration in the midst of this incessant novelty and change, it is necessary to perceive that change is qualitative rather than quantitative in nature. Since quantitative differentiation involves isolating and enumerating discrete instants, it clearly violates this principle of temporal continuity. A differentiation on the basis of quality, however, involves the perceiving of variations which occur as "states" continuously blend and interpenetrate, without the necessity of separating or counting strictly individual units.²⁷ The flow of duration is, then, an uninterrupted process of qualitative change. As Bergson summarily states, "duration properly so called has no moments which are identical or external to one another, being essentially heterogeneous, continuous, and with no

²⁶Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 104-05, 120, 235. In his objection to Bergson's identification of duration with the interpenetration of qualitative moments, Andrew Reck argues that the notion of interpenetration demands a "real distinctness" of qualities. He seems unaware of the subtle difference between things being distinguishable and things being separate. See Andrew Reck, "Bergson's Theory of Duration," Tulane Studies in Philosophy, VIII (1959), pp. 30-31.

²⁷Ibid.

analogy to number."²⁸

Duration of Consciousness

Bergson most frequently discusses the theory of duration, not as a general formula abstracted from things which endure, but in terms of specific realities.²⁹ His initial and most persistent focus is the duration of consciousness, which serves as the prototype for everything that endures.³⁰ In what manner and on what grounds does Bergson ascribe this pure duration to consciousness? Bergson answers the first of these questions much more readily than the second.

The essential feature of duration is its continuity, and what accounts for continuity on the level of conscious

²⁸Time and Free Will, p. 120. Cf. Time and Free Will, p. 104; Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 26.

²⁹"Pure duration" does not therefore refer to an abstract, wholly theoretical concept but rather to a temporality which is free from spatial intrusions and consequently "pure." See Matter and Memory, pp. 280-81.

³⁰Bergson uses the terms "consciousness" (la conscience) and "mind" (l'esprit) synonymously. Consciousness includes whatever activities or functions come within the province of the mental life. The only exception to this occurs in Creative Evolution, where Bergson makes consciousness coextensive with life. This unusual usage of the term is restricted to that work and peculiarly suited to its purposes. When Bergson employs "consciousness" in its narrower, more common meaning, he uses the term "conscious duration," "psychic duration," and "inner duration" as virtually equivalent. See Time and Free Will, pp. 75-139. They will also be used interchangeably in this paper.

life is memory. "There is no consciousness without memory," Bergson maintains,

and no continuation of a state without the addition to the present feeling, of the memory of past moments. It is this which constitutes duration. Inner duration is the continuous life of a memory which prolongs the past into the present, the present either containing within it in a distinct form the ceaselessly growing image of the past, or, more probably, showing by its continual change of quality the heavier and still heavier load we drag behind us as we grow older. Without this survival of the past into the present, there would be no duration, but only instantaneity.³¹

Memory accounts for both the continuity of the temporal flow as well as for the change and novelty which constitute its heterogeneity. Memory ensures continuity by its prolongation of the past into the present, by its "continuation of what no longer exists into what does exist."³² Stimulated by the present moment, memory recalls the past and, in doing so, induces an interpenetration of the past and present. While Bergson frequently refers to conscious states as an "enduring multiplicity," it is clearly a "multiplicity without divisibility."³³ Memory achieves the mingling of past and present, the qualities of the former

³¹Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 40. Cf. Matter and Memory, pp. 80-81, 120, 131-32, 148, 188, 294-97, 315-18; Creative Evolution, pp. 7-10, 20, 232; Mind-Energy, pp. 7-8, 68; Duration and Simultaneity, pp. 44, 48-49; Creative Mind, pp. 153-55.

³²Bergson, Duration and Simultaneity, p. 49.

³³Ibid., p. 44. Cf. Time and Free Will, p. 101.

shading and blending with the latter. Time, then, is thoroughly continuous for "the preservation of the past in the present is nothing else than the indivisibility of change."³⁴

If "duration is the continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and swells it as it advances," then "consciousness cannot go through the same state twice."³⁵ Duration is cumulative with the effect that its "multiplicity of states" are heterogeneous, and the entire process which is continually amplifying, is also continuously changing. Consciousness

cannot remain identical with itself for two consecutive moments, because the second moment always contains, over and above the first, the memory that the first has bequeathed to it. A consciousness which could experience two identical moments is a consciousness without memory.³⁶

Each state in the progress of conscious life is new, and consequently the enduring process itself is irreversible.³⁷ At the same time, "duration is continuous since no state begins or ends, but all extend into each other."³⁸

Bergson's justification for the fact that consciousness endures in this manner is never systematically set

³⁴Bergson, Creative Mind, p. 155

³⁵Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 7, 8.

³⁶Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 26

³⁷Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 8, 20.

³⁸Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 25.

out. There are at least three arguments, however, which occur repeatedly in his work and merit attention. First and most naively, Bergson insists that consciousness has an immediate apprehension of its own duration as it is simply "felt" and "lived."³⁹ Until this immediate apprehension is brought to the level of reflection and more firmly substantiated, it can be readily disputed by the rival claim of those who argue that they do not "feel" or "live" the duration of their own consciousness.⁴⁰ Second, Bergson's previously stated assumption that "there is no consciousness without memory" becomes significant when coupled with the additional claim—amply illustrated above—that memory both accomplishes and expresses the indivisible continuity of the enduring process. If consciousness is essentially memory, and memory ensures duration, then any existent consciousness must endure.

³⁹Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 194, 196-97; Matter and Memory, pp. 191, 272; Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 49-50; Creative Evolution, p. 53; Mind-Energy, p. 179; Duration and Simultaneity, pp. 49, 62; Creative Mind, p. 13. See Creative Mind p. 32 for a succinct statement of how this immediacy will be accomplished on the reflective level through intuition.

⁴⁰This objection is raised by Hugh S. R. Elliot, Modern Science and the Illusions of Professor Bergson (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1912), pp. 64, 65. Unfortunately, Elliot sees only this one aspect of Bergson's theory of immediacy and therefore discredits it as having no epistemological significance.

The third argument, however, is clearly the most decisive. Not only is it the most explicit and consistent that Bergson advances in support of his thesis, but it reveals how radically dependent his metaphysics is upon his theory of knowledge. In brief, the argument is this. The very nature and existence of duration is proved mainly by the fact that it is capable of being perceived.⁴¹ If one perceives one's own conscious life by means of the intellect, then one imposes the categories of space and sees only a homogeneous time and not a pure duration. If one perceives consciousness by means of intuition, then one apprehends it immediately, without the interposing of spatial concepts, and sees it as the pure temporality or pure duration that it is. While this theory clearly demands a thorough investigation—a task which is reserved for the following chapter—let it suffice to say here that Bergson's theory of duration is grounded subjectively in the ability of consciousness to employ intuition in its own self-apprehension. Before taking up this crucial issue, we must conclude our exposition of the duration theory.

Duration of the External World

If duration is going to attain the status of a metaphysical principle as Bergson clearly intends, it must

⁴¹Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 193, 223-24; Matter and Memory, pp. 280-293.

be constitutive not only of consciousness but of the bodies and other material objects which comprise the external world. But when Bergson sets out to establish the enduring character of the external world, a task which he understandably postpones, he is faced with a rather impressive difficulty. As noted above, Bergson describes the duration of consciousness as a pure temporality, free of space and extension and free of all homogeneity. What does Bergson do, however, when he comes to external objects which are, by virtue of their materiality, extended and situated in space? Clearly, the tenability of his metaphysics of duration will depend upon his ability to account for the duration of material objects.

Bergson's changing position on the question of the duration of matter indicates how very troublesome and complex an issue he found it to be. In his first work, Time and Free Will, Bergson argues on behalf of the duration of consciousness but largely ignores the problem of the duration of matter. His assumption is simply that, since matter occupies space, material objects exhibit a "mutual externality without succession," and not the "succession without mutual externality" which characterizes the duration of consciousness.⁴² In Matter and Memory, however, Bergson begins to modify this absolute dichotomy between the spatial

⁴²Time and Free Will, p. 227. Cf. pp. 99, 108.

and non-spatial, between matter and mind, and affirms the fundamental temporality of the physical world.⁴³ Although Creative Evolution basically supports the thesis that matter endures, there are also numerous passages which are regressive in characterizing matter as inertia, which interrupts and divides the otherwise continuous flux of the real.⁴⁴ The final resolution of these difficulties in Creative Evolution, together with the arguments in Duration and Simultaneity (1922) and the two essays "Introduction I and II" (1922), confirms that in Bergson's mature thought matter is as integral to the universal durée as consciousness itself. Let us now analyze his specific arguments.

Bergson establishes the duration of matter on two separate grounds. Bergson's first argument, based upon the nature of matter itself, contends that matter is actually the continuous and indivisible movement of dynamic "centers of force" and not an inert substance which is readily divisible into discrete and separate units. Bergson's second argument is based on his theory of consciousness. Bergson claims that the duration of matter is modeled on conscious

⁴³Capek, Bergson and Modern Physics, p. 91. "In Matter and Memory, however, this untenable dualism of the temporal mind and timeless matter was given up, since becoming was reinstated into the physical realm." Cf. p. 189.

⁴⁴Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 169, 220, 240, 280-84, 294.

durée, and that there are specific experiences of consciousness which will attest to that fact. A more thorough examination of these two arguments will show that, whether Bergson's point of departure is matter or consciousness, his case finally comes to rest on a theory of conscious perception. Once again, it is clear that Bergson's metaphysics of duration depends for its validity on his theory of knowledge.

Bergson's concept of matter, which is by common consent one of the most ill-defined and vague aspects of his metaphysics, affirms the continuous mobility and essential temporality of the physical world. In Matter and Memory, where Bergson comes closest to advancing a coherent position, matter is defined as "an aggregate of images,"⁴⁵ the basic function of an image being to receive and give back movement.⁴⁶ The material universe is therefore composed of numerous "centers of force" which are continuously moving and being moved by one another.⁴⁷ This uninterrupted process of reciprocal action testifies to the fundamental duration, continuity and indivisibility of matter.

In order for interactions to occur, matter must be deployed in time. The "fundamental law of matter," Bergson

⁴⁵Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 5, 8, 26, 43.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 26.

explains, is "to reply to an action received by an immediate reaction which adopts the rhythm of the first and continues it in the same duration, to be in the present and in a present which is always beginning again."⁴⁸ The interactions among its "centers of force" enable matter to be sustained in the present and prolonged into the future. Movement requires time, and the reciprocal motion which constitutes matter accounts for its temporal endurance. The dynamical organization of matter at once presumes and ensures its duration.⁴⁹

Although perilously close to the atomism he criticizes, Bergson's theory differs from classical atomism insofar as it does not isolate its constitutive elements. As Bergson states in Matter and Memory,

We may still speak of atoms; the atom may even retain its individuality for our mind which isolates it; but the solidity and inertia of the atom dissolve either into movements or into lines of force whose reciprocal solidarity brings back to us universal continuity.⁵⁰

Although Bergson speaks of matter in terms of atomistic elements, he hastens to add that their incessant interaction

⁴⁸Matter and Memory, p. 279.

⁴⁹There is every indication that duration, whether of consciousness or of matter, has basically the same features. (Cf. Capek, Bergson and Modern Physics, p. 191) In discussing the duration of matter, however, Bergson fails to touch upon all of the characteristics applied to conscious duration. This is yet another indication of his obscuring the theory of matter.

⁵⁰Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 265.

achieves a "reciprocal solidarity," making matter itself continuous and indivisible. Bergson offers the example of the solar system. "Our sun radiates heat and light beyond the farthest planet and . . . our entire solar system is moving in a definite direction as if it were drawn."⁵¹

There is, Bergson insists, a "bond between the worlds."⁵²

The thread attaching the sun to the rest of the universe is doubtless very tenuous. Nevertheless it is along this thread that is transmitted down to the smallest particle of the world in which we live the duration immanent in the whole of the universe.⁵³

Moreover,

if there is a truth that science has placed beyond dispute, it is that of the reciprocal action of all parts of matter upon each other. Between the supposed molecules of bodies the forces of attraction and repulsion are at work. The influence of gravitation extends throughout interplanetary space.⁵⁴

Even in the outer reaches of space where bodies seem most separate and indifferent, there is a bond of active forces between them. Matter exhibits a continuity of interactions, an interpenetration of its "centers of force," which cannot properly speaking be divided. Any interpretation of matter as absolutely divisible, as composed of strictly delimited

⁵¹Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 263.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid., p. 14.

⁵⁴Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 264.

bodies isolated in themselves and external to one another, could only be a consequence of a mind which immobilizes the activity it perceives and divides what is continuous. Any interpretation of matter as inert, discontinuous or divisible is an effect of conscious perception and not a description of matter itself.

The main force of Bergson's argument, whether it takes matter or consciousness as its starting point, hinges on the theory that conscious perception both hinders and facilitates our view of matter as an uninterrupted mobility and duration. First of all, we are hindered by the twofold tendency of the mind to immobilize and divide what it perceives. The mind's tendency to render its objects immobile is due in part to the nature of the intellect itself, which seeks what is inert and unchanging in whatever it perceives, with the result that it can comprehend movement only in terms of static points through which the moving object passes, and can understand duration only in terms of the progress from one static instant to the next.⁵⁵ On the other hand, we tend to immobilize external objects because their rhythm of duration may differ from ours, becoming either so rapid or so slow as to seem motionless.⁵⁶ Our

⁵⁵Matter and Memory, pp. 275-76, 278, 305; Creative Evolution, pp. 327-28; Creative Mind, pp. 14-15, 70.

⁵⁶There are several passages where Bergson speaks of the different rhythms of duration (Matter and Memory,

perception of matter as inert and unchanging is due to our habitual tendency to view objects relative to our own temporal rhythm.

Once matter is immobilized, it then becomes readily divisible into independent objects. Although Bergson acknowledges that we do legitimately discriminate among material objects, he consistently denies that they are in reality absolutely separate.

That there are, in a sense, multiple objects, that one man is distinct from another man, tree from tree, stone from stone, is an indisputable fact: for each of these beings, each of these things has characteristic properties and obeys a determined law of evolution. But the separation between a thing and its environment cannot be absolutely definite and clear cut; there is a passage by insensible gradations from the one to the other: the close solidarity which binds all the objects of the material universe, the perpetuity of their reciprocal actions and reactions, is sufficient to prove that they have not the precise limits which we attribute to them.⁵⁷

Bergson's explanation of our tendency to divide the indivisible is, once again, that "the primary and most important

pp. 75, 275-76, 279; Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 47; Duration and Simultaneity, p. 51). Consequently, if something moves at a speed far exceeding our own, the speed of light for example, we perceive its effects as colors which are stable. Similarly, if something changes so slowly as to be imperceptible, the gradual wearing and aging of a rock for example, then it seems changeless. For further illustrations, see H. Wildon Carr, Henri Bergson: The Philosophy of Change (London: T. C. & E. C. Jack, 1919), pp. 38-39.

⁵⁷ Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 277-78. Italics mine.

operation of the perceiving mind" is that "it marks out divisions in the continuity of the extended, simply following the suggestions of our requirement and the needs of practical life."⁵⁸ In order to so divide matter, the mind projects beneath the continuous mobility of the real an infinitely divisible substratum of homogeneous space.⁵⁹ We then are able to employ the linear model and mark out points in space which represent independent objects.⁶⁰ What prompts our division of the world in this manner is the urgency of our own biological needs and the requirements of action.⁶¹ Unless objects are clearly set off from one another, such practical, life-sustaining activities as procuring food, seeking out what is useful and avoiding what is harmful, become immensely difficult, if not impossible. Needs are directed toward and satisfied by specific types of objects and our ability to fulfill our needs necessitates the delimiting and defining of those objects within the environment.⁶²

As necessary as this capacity for immobilizing and

⁵⁸Matter and Memory, p. 278.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 278, 280, 292.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 279.

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 261-62, 266, 280-82, 290; Creative Evolution, pp. 173, 297.

⁶²Matter and Memory, pp. 261-62.

dividing reality may be, Bergson laments that we confuse our reinterpretation of matter for practical purposes with the nature of matter itself.⁶³ Quite surprisingly, however, Bergson recognizes that the mind's tendency to perceive different rhythms of duration, which contributes to the immobilization of matter, also enables consciousness to grasp matter's essential mobility and duration. Furthermore, Bergson goes beyond the naive assumption that consciousness simply "feels" the duration of external objects, and suggests that the mind, through intuition, can know an object "from within" as the dynamical organization it is. These are the two basic arguments Bergson provides to establish the duration of matter from the viewpoint of consciousness.

The ability of consciousness to perceive different rhythms of duration has important implications for the duration of matter. Bergson's argument originates in the observation that "the states of our material world are contemporaneous with the history of our consciousness. As the latter endures the former must be bound in some way to real duration."⁶⁴ Bergson's classic example of "waiting for the sugar to melt" illustrates this point.

⁶³ Matter and Memory, p. 262. "It is nothing, in fact, but the ordinary condition of useful action, unsuitably transported into the domain of pure knowledge."

⁶⁴ Bergson, Creative Mind, p. 20.

If I want to mix a glass of sugar and water, I must, willy-nilly, wait until the sugar melts. This little fact is big with meaning. For here the time I have to wait . . . coincides with my impatience, that is to say, with a certain portion of my own duration, which I cannot protract or contract as I like.⁶⁵

The fact that consciousness waits on an event in the external world, indicates that things are accomplished, not "all at once," but gradually in time. Consciousness comes to this realization when it is kept waiting, when the unfolding of things in time moves more slowly than the duration of consciousness. By contrast with our own psychic time, the temporality of the physical world announces itself by progressing at a rhythm different from our own, but neither too rapid nor too slow to be an imperceptible difference. Thus, the selfsame ability of consciousness to view the duration of material objects relative to its own leads to a view of matter as inert and atemporal, and to a view of matter as mobile and enduring.

A second proof for the duration of matter which derives from consciousness is discussed in the famous example from Introduction to Metaphysics of an object moving in space.⁶⁶ Bergson claims that the movement of an object can be viewed in two ways: either "relatively," from a

⁶⁵Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 12-13: Cf. Creative Mind, pp. 20-21, 33.

⁶⁶Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 21-22.

perspective external to the object, or "absolutely" from "inside" the moving object itself. In the first instance, the movement is calculated in terms of a series of points, axes or other symbols of measurement. In the second case, such symbols are dispensable since the object is viewed "from where it is, from within, as it is itself."⁶⁷ The former is the method of intellectual analysis, the latter is the work of intuition.

The significance of this passage for the duration of material objects is this. Whether Bergson is discussing the spatial or temporal movement of an object, he attributes to the object an "inside" and an "outside." This unfortunately dualistic language serves more to obscure than to clarify the point Bergson intends to make. Bergson is not speaking of two different kinds of objective reality, or two different natures of a single object. What is decisive in this text is that what seems to be a metaphysical claim is actually a statement about the ideal limits of perception. "Inside" refers not to some mysterious region of being which is different in nature from an outer strata, but to the extent of the mind's penetration of the object and its ability to see it as the temporally fluid and continuous reality that it is. Bergson avoids a metaphysical dualism, as he consistently argues that the object or the so-called

⁶⁷Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 22.

"absolute" is a "simple thing."⁶⁸ It is possible, however, to view this simple reality in-depth or superficially, from the unmediated point of view of intuition or through the mediating symbols which the intellect constructs and confuses with the reality itself. He is speaking, then, not of two realities, but of reality as viewed from two perspectives.

These two forms of knowledge, their limits and possibilities, will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter II. The point to be made here is that Bergson can without contradiction affirm the duration of extended material objects by appealing to the distinction, which is basically an epistemological one, between the object as an absolutely simple, enduring reality, and the object perceived as an inert, discrete unit of matter. If the mind, by means of intuition, is capable of discerning material objects as uninterrupted processes of movement in time, then the duration of matter is confirmed by the intuitive apprehension of consciousness.

With the preceding arguments on behalf of the duration of matter, we have come full circle. Bergson has intended to show that "duration . . . is the foundation of our being, and . . . the very substance of the world in

⁶⁸Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 23.

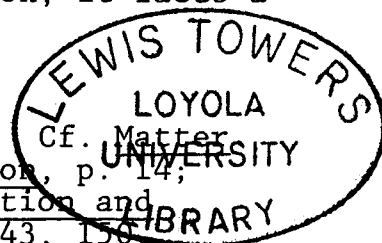
which we live."⁶⁹ In establishing his metaphysics of duration, he has offered evidence for the duration of consciousness and the external world, for the continuous temporality and mobility of mind and matter. However convincing these claims, our acceptance of his metaphysics must be tentative to the extent that it is based on epistemological considerations. The validity of the arguments grounded in conscious perception will depend upon our findings in the critical examination of Bergson's theory of knowledge.

Epistemological Implications of

Bergson's Metaphysics

The interdependency of Bergson's metaphysics and theory of knowledge, remarked upon early in the discussion, has now taken on a more specific sense. It is clear from the preceding analysis that the burden of proof for the duration of consciousness and the external world falls to Bergson's epistemology. If the enduring character of reality is confirmed by consciousness perceiving it as such, then Bergson must explain the conditions for the possibility of such knowledge. Since this epistemology will be elaborated within the context of a metaphysics of duration, it faces a

⁶⁹Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 45. Cf. Matter and Memory, pp. 178, 296-97; Creative Evolution, p. 14; Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 49-50; Duration and Simultaneity, pp. 45-46; Creative Mind, pp. 143, 150.



peculiar set of problems. How can a reality in process of continuous movement and change be known? How does consciousness which is itself temporal grasp external objects which have different rhythms of duration? In short, to what extent does knowledge require stability in the knower, in the known and in the relation between them?

Bergson's theory of intuition is an attempt to justify and explain, on the cognitive level, how consciousness can have an immediate knowledge of duration as duration. Whether or not duration can be known in its continuous temporal flow rests on the theory of intuition; and since the knowability of duration is the major proof Bergson offers for the fact that "reality endures," his metaphysics finally depends on the strength of his epistemology. That epistemology, in turn, must face the problems of a temporal consciousness striving for knowledge within an enduring world.

In the following chapter, I will examine the basic structure of Bergson's theory of knowledge—the distinction between intellect and intuition. In doing so, my interest will be both retrospective and prospective. On the one hand, the discussion will bear in mind the critical role the theory of knowledge, particularly intuition, plays in substantiating his metaphysics of duration. On the other hand, it shall anticipate the problem of expression which will emerge from the theory of intuitive knowledge. If Bergson

is able to show that we can in fact cognitively apprehend duration, then the problem arises as to what forms of expression, if any, will be adequate to this knowledge of a fluid and mobile durée.

CHAPTER II

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE: INTELLECT AND INTUITION

Any theory of knowledge makes certain presuppositions about the world, for in a very fundamental way our methods of knowing structure the kind of world we see. Bergson's distinction between intellect and intuition, which is the basis of his epistemology, rests upon this assumption. The method of intellectual analysis, employing abstract and immobile symbolic representations, apprehends static images rather than process, homogeneous time rather than pure duration. Intuition, on the other hand, dispenses with symbols and gives us a direct, immediate grasp of duration as duration. Consequently, Bergson criticizes the methods of the intellect for obscuring duration, while he recommends to our use intuition which discloses it. The nature and function of these two mental operations will be analyzed in this chapter in the interest of substantiating Bergson's metaphysics, and in the interest of taking up the new questions to which the distinction gives rise.

At the outset it should be noted that intellect and intuition are not diametrically opposed as is commonly

assumed.¹ A careful reading of Bergson will indicate that they are not separate faculties, but distinct, though complementary functions of the mind. Of the two, intellect is unquestionably the more general. In a somewhat confusing manner, Bergson uses the word "intellect" equivocally: in its broadest usage, it is synonymous with mind and encompasses all mental activity; in its more specific sense, it is a specialized function of the mind which is set in contrast to intuition. While Bergson trades more heavily on the second meaning, there are also several texts in which intelligence is virtually equivalent to the mind itself. Frequently, intuition is described as a function of the intellect;² Bergson even defines intuition as an "intellectual

¹Bergson, Mind-Energy, pp. 34-35. Among the few commentators to stress this fact are G. W. Cunningham, A Study in the Philosophy of Bergson (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1916) and Pete A. Gunter, "Bergson's Reflective Anti-Intellectualism," Personalist, XLVII (1966), 43-60. Of particular importance is Chapter III of Cunningham's study, "Intuition and Intelligence" (pp. 32-64), in which he defends the following thesis: "intuition involves intellectual activity and transcends it, if at all, only as a more comprehensive and concrete form of the same sort of knowledge. From this point of view, 'there is no essential difference between the intellect and this intuition itself.'" (p. 61) For a typical overstatement of the opposition between intelligence and intuition see Harold N. Lee, "Bergson's Two Ways of Knowing," Tulane Studies in Philosophy, VIII (1959), p. 49. Lee's entire article is founded on this misconception.

²Bergson, Creative Mind, pp. 78-79. There are even a few vague suggestions in Bergson's essay on "intellectual effort" (Mind-Energy, pp. 210, 214) that the intellect accomplishes work normally attributed to intuition. Cf. Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 51.

auscultation"³ or an "intellectual sympathy."⁴ Bergson also acknowledges the existence of intuition "around the fringes of the intellect," further implying that it is an auxiliary function of the more general capacity of intelligence.⁵ Bergson maintains that intuition completes the work of the intellect by disclosing the mobile aspect of reality which it is incapable of grasping.⁶ Mindful, then, that Bergson's distinction between intellect and intuition does not suggest their absolute separation, let us analyze their diverse but related functions.

The Problems of Intellectual Analysis

The intellect, considered as a specific operation of the mind, knows an object by means of analysis. In Introduction to Metaphysics, Bergson describes the work of analysis as the accumulation of multiple perspectives on an object, the translation of them into conceptual representations, and the subsequent reconstruction of the object by a synthesis of the points of view one has symbolized.⁷ In

³Bergson, Mind-Energy, pp. 36-37.

⁴Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 23-24, 51, 61.

⁵Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. xxiii, 53, 56, 211; Creative Mind, p. 80; The Two Sources of Morality and Religion, trans. by F. L. Pogson (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960), p. 212.

⁶Creative Evolution, p. 195, 372-73.

⁷Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 24.

examining our use of this method, Bergson finds that, despite its practical value, it effects certain subtle distortions of the reality we are seeking to know. At every stage of the analytical process, the intellect exhibits two main tendencies: it retains only general aspects of any concrete reality, and it takes only static views of its enduring objects. This generalization and immobilization of reality Bergson traces to the conceptual representations or symbols which are integral to the analytical method.⁸ The perceptions from which the concept is derived, and the linguistic, musical and artistic forms in which it is expressed, are adapted to the concept and share its basic tendencies. Consequently, Bergson's critique of intellectual analysis encompasses not only its cognitive processes of perception and conception, but the expressive forms in which these concepts are embodied.

The first stage of analysis, which is perception, begins with the intellect taking a point of view on its

⁸When Bergson employs the term "symbol," he intends only its basically representative function. Although he does make occasional mention of numerical symbolism (Time and Free Will, pp. 78-79, 86-90, 119, 234; Matter and Memory, p. 255; Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 52; Creative Evolution, pp. 230-31, 237; Creative Mind, pp. 12-13), his preoccupation is unquestionably with language. In fact, as we shall subsequently see, his identification of the concept with the word is so consistent and so strong that his critique of concepts becomes, in effect, a critique of language as well.

object,⁹ and then varying and multiplying successive points of view until a series of impressions is obtained.¹⁰ There are two aspects of this procedure which are especially significant. First of all, when consciousness observes an object from a particular perspective, it must necessarily adopt a position external to the object from which its observation can be made. Bergson argues that taking an "outside" point of view precludes access to the object "from where it is, from within, as it is in itself."¹¹ To accumulate perspectives around an object, Bergson maintains, is not to "enter into it." A second implication is that points of view provide only glimpses or snapshots of the reality perceived.¹² As Bergson will more amply illustrate in his discussion of the concept, the collection of these separate perspectives can never give more than a partial and static view of the object. Thus, even in the initial

⁹Unless specifically indicated otherwise, this and all subsequent uses of the word "object" denote its most general meaning as anything which can be taken as an object of knowledge, not just material or external objects.

¹⁰Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 21, 24, 38.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 21-22 f. Cf. 38-39.

¹²Ibid., pp. 24, 25. See also Matter and Memory, p. 278. "Such is the primary and most apparent operation of the perceiving mind: it marks our divisions in the continuity of the extended, simply following the suggestions of our requirement and the needs of practical life."

act of perception, consciousness is situated outside its object, viewing it from a series of fixed positions external to it.

In the second stage of analysis, the impressions obtained in perception are translated by the intellect into concepts.¹³ Bergson broadly defines concepts as "abstract, general, or simple ideas"¹⁴ which are, in effect, "symbols substituted for the object they symbolize."¹⁵ In serving their representative functions, concepts "never actually give us more than an artificial reconstruction of the object, of which they can only symbolize certain general

¹³ Although Bergson repeatedly alludes to the intellect as the concept-making faculty, he states so quite explicitly in Creative Evolution, pp. xix, 56.

Jean Theau, in his recent book La critique bergsonienne du concept (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1968), argues this thesis: "D'un bout à l'autre de son [Bergson's] oeuvre, nous espérons le montrer, c'est sa critique de la pensée par concepts, laquelle engendrait une nouvelle critique de l'intelligence." (p. 15) However promising Theau's topic, there are disappointing features of its realization. First of all, Theau gives only casual treatment to Bergson's Creative Mind and Introduction to Metaphysics in deference to an exceedingly lengthy and technical analysis of Time and Free Will, Matter and Memory, Creative Evolution and Two Sources (p. 20). This selectiveness causes many of Bergson's most lucid and summary statements on the concept to be overshadowed by the bulk of his psychological and biological data, which lends them only vague support. In addition, Theau's emphasis also results in a relatively sparse treatment of Bergson's innovative notion of the "fluid concept." Secondly, Theau's study has its stylistic difficulties. It frequently suffers from verbosity, grandiloquence and a devotional tone.

¹⁴ Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 27.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 28.

and, in a way, impersonal aspects."¹⁶ Bergson explains that a concept grasps only the general features of an object since it

retains only that part of the object which is common to it and to others, and expresses . . . a comparison between the object and others which resemble it. . . . The concept can only symbolize a particular property by making it common to an infinity of things. It therefore always more or less deforms the property by the extension it gives to it. . . . Thus, the different concepts that we form of the properties of the thing inscribe around it so many circles, each much too large and none of them fitting it exactly.¹⁷

The generality of the concept to which Bergson refers is familiar. Since concepts are, at least in principle, applicable to more than one object, they must be sufficiently general to include all the particulars which share in their meaning. Understandably, the broader the extension of the concept, the more general and diluted its meaning becomes.¹⁸ What is perhaps less commonly observed is that this generality does a disservice to the object it represents. For example, when the word "red" is applied to a particular item, it implies that its color is comparable to the red of other things. Although this particular shade of red may be quite distinctive, the concept does not deliver its uniqueness. When we attempt to solve the problem

¹⁶Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 29.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 28-29. Cf. 22, 37.

¹⁸Bergson, Creative Mind, p. 49.

by inventing intermediary concepts, such as scarlet, burgundy or vermilion to express these subtle variations, we simply prolong the difficulty. Each of these concepts in turn encompasses different shades of scarlet or burgundy. So even if we specify gradations indefinitely, we can never eradicate the essential generality of the concept.¹⁹ Thus, although Bergson will admit that the concept exhibits remarkable versatility by being employable in a variety of contexts and in reference to numerous objects,²⁰ he also sees that its extension has the serious disadvantage that the concept is always "too large," too imprecise, too abstract to disclose the novel or distinctive features of a concrete, particular object.²¹

Another even more serious limitation of the concept is its tendency to immobilize and divide its objects. Concepts, like the perceptions from which they are derived, are only so many snapshots of reality which, however diligently they are accumulated, remain only motionless and partial views of the object they symbolize.²² In conceptualizing

¹⁹Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 28, 39.

²⁰Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 174-77. See Theau, La critique bergsonienne du concept, pp. 445-46.

²¹Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 28; Creative Mind, pp. 34-35, 95; Creative Evolution, p. 180.

²²Bergson explains the static nature of concepts by the fact that the intellect is modeled on inert matter, rather than on living, dynamic realities. (Creative Evolution, pp. 177, 216-17, 225, 273, 281; Creative Mind, pp.

our own conscious life, for example, the intellect marks out "states" and "sensation," designates them by separate concepts, and then attempts to recreate the continuity of conscious life by combining the different concepts.²³

Similarly, we distinguish objects in the continuous flow of matter by demarcating their boundaries with separate concepts.²⁴ We further divide these individual objects by breaking them down into numerous qualities and attributes.²⁵ Thus, whether the intellect employs concepts to divide reality itself into consciousness and matter,²⁶ or consciousness into states, or matter into things, or things into attributes, the effect is always to decompose what is whole and continuous into parts which are discrete and stable.

38-39, 42-43) Just as the material world "presents to us objects external to other objects, and, within these objects, parts external to parts," (Creative Evolution, p. 169), so concepts "are outside each other, like objects in space; and they have the same stability as such objects on which they have been modeled." (Creative Evolution, p. 177).

²³Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 162-64, 167, 196; Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 40; Mind-Energy, p. 179; Creative Evolution, pp. 5-7, 281, 297; Creative Mind, p. 95.

²⁴Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 170-71, 245, 293; Creative Evolution, pp. 297, 328; Creative Mind, pp. 34-35.

²⁵Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 30, 44; Creative Evolution, pp. 228, 326-27. It follows that the more subdivisions the intellect makes, the more complexity it finds in the object.

²⁶Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 190-91.

The third stage of analysis is the intellect's effort to recompose the fullness and fluidity of the object by gathering together the concepts into which it has been divided and solidified.²⁷ Bergson argues that once an object is dissected conceptually, it cannot be grasped as unified and entire simply by combining the various concepts which describe it. Even if concepts are multiplied, their inherent generality prevents them, either individually or collectively, from seizing the particular.²⁸ Amassing generalities does not account for the move beyond the general toward the concrete, individual object. Furthermore, the accumulation of static and partial conceptions in an effort to seize the enduring object is equally unsuccessful. The problem of collecting a set of inert concepts is analogous to stringing together motionless points in order to conceive movement. As discussed in Chapter I, however numerous the points on a line and however minute the intervals between them, a series of immobilities will never disclose

²⁷In Creative Evolution Bergson indicates the intellect's "unlimited power of decomposing according to any law and of recomposing into any system." (p. 173)

²⁸Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 22. Bergson also suggests here that only when these general concepts are grasped intuitively can they lead to a knowledge of the particular object. It should be carefully noted that this is not a function of the concepts themselves, but of the intuitive process which is auxiliary to them.

the uninterrupted progress of the moving object.²⁹ Movement slips through the intervals,³⁰ for at most one has traced the path along which the object has passed, but not the actual passing itself.³¹ Similarly, any attempt to reconstruct reality out of so many conceptual viewpoints is bound to be inadequate. In Creative Evolution, Bergson compares the intellect to a cinematograph.³² Just as the unreeling of a film tries to simulate continuous action by a rapid succession of discrete, motionless frames, so does the intellect attempt to capture enduring objects by synthesizing stable conceptions of them. What results is a string of conceptual snapshots which give, at best, merely

²⁹Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 42. Cf. Chapter I, pp. 11-12.

³⁰Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 334.

³¹This was precisely the error of Zeno. If one expresses movement as a series of points along a line, and notes the progress of the moving object by marking its passage from point to point, there is nothing to prevent one from inserting an infinite number of points along the course through which the moving object must pass. Hence, with an infinite number of points to be surpassed, the arrow will never reach its target and Achilles will never pass the tortoise. (Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 111-115; Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 21-22, 43-45; Creative Evolution, pp. 335 f.; Creative Mind, pp. 17, 144-45.) For an extensive analysis of Bergson and the Eleatic paradox see the essay by Harve Barreau, "Bergson et Zénon d'Elée: La conception bergsonienne du mouvement et l'eleatisme," Revue Philosophique de Louvain, LXVII (May, August, 1969), 267-84, 389-430.

³²Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 331-35, 339, 341, 354; Creative Mind, pp. 18, 93.

the illusion of real duration. Bergson's conclusion is that concepts are, by their very nature, general and static representations through which the particularity and continuity of reality always escapes.

If intellectual analysis does such a disservice to the world in the process of perceiving and conceptualizing it, what is it that recommends this method to our use? Bergson's answer is simple. While intellectual analysis proves incapable of a pure, disinterested grasp of reality as it is, it serves the very practical function of stabilizing and ordering the world to prepare it for action. The intellect adopts the analytical method in response to our need to survive in a world of change, for analysis, step by step, creates a stable conceptual framework in which to harness the fluid world. In Introduction to Metaphysics, Bergson summarizes this work of the intellect:

the normal work of the intellect is far from being disinterested. We do not aim generally at knowledge for the sake of knowledge, but in order to take sides, to draw profit—in short, to satisfy an interest. We inquire up to what point the object we seek to know is this or that, to what known class it belongs, and what kind of action, bearing or attitude it should suggest to us. . . . To try to fit a concept to an object is simply to ask what we can do with the object, and what it can do for us. To label an object with a certain concept is to mark in precise terms the kind of action or attitude the object should suggest to us. All knowledge properly so called, is then oriented in a certain direction or taken from a certain point of view.³³

³³Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 38-39. Cf. Time and Free Will, pp. 129, 133-34, 138-39, 230-31,

Clearly the aim of the intellect is pragmatic—it seeks to know the world in order to determine the use to which it might be put or the action we should adopt toward it. The point of view we take in perception betrays the particular interest we have in the object. Our subsequent conceptualizing of the object according to that point of view enables us to identify, classify and order the random particulars of experience, and to arrest their continuous mobility in fixed, well defined concepts. These efforts of the intellect serve to orient us in the world and to give us a firm basis for action.

So deeply ingrained is the need to falsify the enduring world for our practical ends, that the tendencies inherent in the cognitive process carry over to our modes of expression as well. Each of the three major expressive forms, language, music and the visual arts, exhibit certain characteristics which ally them to the process of intellectual analysis and open them to the same criticisms.

Language, which is the principal medium for the expression of conceptual thought, inherits virtually all the limitations of the concept due to the fact that, for

236-37; Matter and Memory, pp. 21, 33, 191, 241, 278, 304-06; Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 45, 50; Creative Evolution, pp. 173, 210, 214 f., 217, 296-97, 324, 332-33; Mind-Energy, pp. 58, 71; Creative Mind, pp. 70, 78, 80; Two Sources, pp. 253-54. Cf. Theau, La critique bergsonienne du concept, p. 316.

Bergson, the word is the concept expressed.³⁴ Like concepts, words also suffer from being too general insofar as the meaning they express is capable of encompassing several particulars;³⁵ they are static, not only because of their obvious rigidity in form, but also because of their relative stability in meaning.³⁶ Furthermore, the word performs the same ordering and abstracting function as its conceptual counterpart, enabling us to manipulate the world of objects and to create the network of social relations which is essential to most life-sustaining and productive activity.³⁷ Language, at least on the surface of things, seems to share all the characteristics of the concepts it articulates. Chapter III, however, will include a more penetrating discussion of language, not in terms of its appropriateness to the analytical method, but in view of its adaptability to

³⁴See Chapter II, n. 8. While Bergson clearly identifies the concept with the word, he never explicitly addresses the question of whether thought is essentially linguistic or whether it is possible to think in the absence of language.

³⁵Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 13, 132, 134-35, 160, 163-64; Mind-Energy, pp. 153, 156; Creative Evolution, pp. 175-76; Creative Mind, pp. 55-56.

³⁶Time and Free Will, pp. ix, 129-32, 167, 196, 226-27, 239-40; Matter and Memory, pp. 59, 154, 158-59, 239-40; Creative Evolution, pp. 340, 354-55; Creative Mind, pp. 14, 27, 35, 56, 69, 81. See Theau, La critique bergsonienne du concept, pp. 445-46.

³⁷Time and Free Will, pp. 138-39, 231; Creative Evolution, p. 289; Creative Mind, pp. 70, 80; Two Sources, pp. 253-54, 275.

an intuitive grasp of duration as duration.

Of lesser concern to Bergson are the expressive forms of music and art. While their detailed examination will be undertaken in the next chapter, a preliminary observation to be made here is that both modes of expression bear the stamp of the intellect by being essentially static in form. A musical score, for example, symbolizes the continuous temporal flow of musical sound by means of a succession of discrete notes on a line in space.³⁸ The limitations of this symbolic form are analogous to those Bergson finds in other linear models used to represent time or motion.³⁹ Whether a series of points is used to represent moments in time, the positions of a moving object or notes in a musical tune, the problem is that the extended line of inert points is a spatial symbolism and, as such, is inadequate to convey a temporal process. A musical score is a prime example of this attempt to express time spatially, and to reduce its continuous movement to a succession of motionless points.

The visual arts of painting and sculpturing present a similar problem. As Bergson remarks in Time and Free Will, "The plastic arts obtain an effect of the same kind by the

³⁸Bergson, Creative Mind, pp. 147-48. Bergson's entire discussion of music turns on the distinction between music as a written score and music as it is heard when performed. In the context of his theory of intellectual analysis, the first of these is most important.

³⁹See Chapter I, pp. 11-12.

fixity which they suddenly impose upon life, and which a physical contagion carries over to the attention of the spectator."⁴⁰ Painting and sculpturing, which are intrinsically spatial, are composed of a juxtaposition of inert visual forms. The problem by now is familiar: Bergson suggests that motionless forms placed side by side in space cannot adequately symbolize the uninterrupted duration of things. Furthermore, Bergson questions the ability of the visual arts to represent an enduring object completely. In Introduction to Metaphysics, Bergson cites the example of an artist painting the Tower of Notre Dame in Paris. However numerous the sketches, however varied the point of view, the artist can never reconstruct the actual tower.⁴¹ As Bergson argues elsewhere, numerous partial glimpses will never, taken together, give the actual object in its entirety. The plastic arts, then, employ static imagery which arrests the fluid temporality of things and which offers only a still glimpse or snapshot of its object, providing only one of many perspectives which could be taken of it.

What this brief discussion shows very clearly is

⁴⁰Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 15. Italics mine. One is reminded of John Keats' "Ode on a Graecian Urn" wherein the vase, depicting a moment's activity as frozen and eternally changeless, becomes the prototype of the visual arts.

⁴¹Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 32. Cf. p. 22.

the definite effect which the analytical method has, not only upon language, but upon the expressive forms of music and art. If intellectual analysis consists in the tendency to immobilize and divide the continuous flow of duration into discrete perceptions and concepts, then it is equally important to recognize that our most common forms of expression are infected with the same tendencies. Upon examining the intuitive method, which is capable of grasping duration as duration, these three expressive forms will be reviewed again in terms of the possibilities they hold for overcoming the limitations imposed by intellectual analysis.

Intuition: An Alternative to the Intellect

Bergson's study of the problems of the intellect, particularly its inability to conceive duration, leads not only to a critique of the analytical method, but to the constructive suggestion that the mind adopt an alternative mode of knowing, intuition. The methodological differences between the intellect and intuition arise from their fundamental difference in purpose: whereas the intellect is governed by practical interests and approaches objects with a view towards their utilization, intuition seeks only a pure, disinterested knowledge of reality as it is; while the aim of the intellect is to seek in reality a support for action, intuition seeks to comprehend reality in its

concrete immediacy.⁴²

In order to accomplish its objective, intuition must avoid the pitfalls of intellectual analysis. Since the intellect's tendency to assume a point of view in perception and employ conceptual representations in the thought process serves to generalize and immobilize the concrete duration of existing things, intuition must either dispense with the tools and operations of the intellect or substantially revise them in order to grasp duration as duration. Thus, as Bergson develops the theory of intuition, he contrasts it point by point with the method of intellectual analysis.⁴³

⁴²Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 38-39; Creative Evolution, pp. 324-25, 372-73; Creative Mind, pp. 34, 127, 138; Two Sources, pp. 249-50. It is instructive here to note that intuition has its roots in instinct. Although "instinct is not within the domain of intelligence," it is capable of an immediate "knowledge" of definite objects without the tendency to solidify them or view them as inert bits of matter. (Creative Evolution, p. 163 f.) Unlike intelligence, "instinct is molded on the very form of life." (Creative Evolution, p. 182) Intuition is instinct elevated to the level of reflection. (Creative Evolution, p. 194; Creative Mind, p. 88) Although intuition abandons the practical interests of instinct, it retains its ability to grasp objects in their particularity and vitality. (Creative Evolution, p. 194; Two Sources, pp. 249-50) For a more extended discussion of instinct, see J. M'Keller Stewart, A Critical Exposition of Bergson's Philosophy, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1911), 176-82.

⁴³See Andre Robinet, Bergson et les métamorphoses de la durée (Paris: Seghers, 1965), pp. 144-48. There are at least two problems which result from the fact that Bergson contrasts the intuitive method with that of the intellect. First, Bergson's theory of intuition is frequently criticized as anti-intellectual. This is clearly not the case since, as noted early in this chapter, intuition is actually a function of the intellect. In an article

Intuition begins in perception with the abandonment of the perspective or point of view adopted in analysis. Instead of assuming a position outside the object, Bergson proposes that the mind "enter into the object."⁴⁴ to perceive it "from where it is, from within, as it is in itself."⁴⁵ This penetration of the object is accomplished by a kind of "intellectual auscultation" or "intellectual sympathy by which one places oneself within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it and consequently inexpressible."⁴⁶ Relinquishing its practical interests,

entitled "Bergson's Reflective Anti-Intellectualism," The Personalist, XLVII (1966), 43-60, Pete Gunter argues that, although Bergson is critical of the intellect, he is not, in any extreme sense, anti-intellectual. Intuition, after all, is a type of reflection which is able to grasp reality more firmly and more completely than the intellect can. (See Chapter II, n. 49.) Second, Bergson is frequently criticized for defining intuition only negatively. As our subsequent discussion will show, intuition includes a theory of perception, conception and expression which are not simply negations of the intellectual method. but which have a positive content of their own.

⁴⁴Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 21, 23, 24, 51; Creative Evolution, pp. 194-95.

⁴⁵Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 21-22. Although Theau's discussion of intuition lacks focus, it contains several lucid descriptions of this and subsequent stages of the intuitive process (La critique bergsonienne du concept, pp. 135-47).

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 23-24. Cf. pp. 36-37, 51, 61. H. Waldon Carr argues that intuition is non-intellectual on the grounds that it is neither a perception nor conception. As our discussion will show, this interpretation is wholly untenable since Bergson does make positive recommendations for the intuitive method at both stages. (Henri Bergson, The Philosophy of Change, Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1970), p. 22.

the mind becomes attentive and sympathetic to what the object is in itself.⁴⁷ Instead of multiplying perspectives, dividing and isolating its different positions or moments or properties, the mind perceives the simple, indivisible reality of the particular object which underlies all of these descriptions.⁴⁸ Since the mind possesses its object completely, there is nothing to be gained by subjecting it to analysis. "Coincidence" with the object clearly obviates the need to measure and calculate its spatio-temporal movements from the outside. Rather, consciousness adapts its own rhythm to that of the object and enters into its temporal flow.⁴⁹ Thus the concreteness and endurance of the object are already established in perception.

⁴⁷Merleau-Ponty rightly suggests that for Bergson "sympathy" does not mean that consciousness "becomes the organism" but rather that it "takes the thing by knowledge." Jean DePrun, ed., L'union de l'âme et du corps chez Malebranche, Briant et Bergson. Notes prises au cours de M. Merleau-Ponty à l'école normale supérieure (1947-48). (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1968), p. 114.

⁴⁸Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 28-29, 40-41, 51, 60; Creative Mind, pp. 30-31. Bergson denotes the essence of the object by the unfortunate term "absolute" by which he means the object itself, the original. Although Bergson recognizes that the absolute can be analysed and divided indefinitely, he argues that "viewed from the inside, it is a simple thing." (Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 23)

⁴⁹At the same time that Bergson collapses the distance between consciousness and its object in perception, he claims with equal insistence that intuition is a type of reflection. (Creative Mind, p. 88) Is there not a contradiction here? On the one hand, reflection seems to demand

In order to avoid a regression to abstractness and immobility on the level of conception, Bergson boldly suggests that the mind dispense with conceptual representations employed by the intellect in analysis.⁵⁰ Although Bergson occasionally hints that concepts can serve to prepare the mind for seizing its intuitions,⁵¹ he argues much more extensively and forcibly that concepts serve more to prevent than to facilitate intuitive apprehensions.⁵² In arguments set out in the previous section, the concept draws criticism for its twofold tendency to an abstractness which obscures the particularity of the concrete object, and to an immobility which stabilizes its interrupted flow. Although there are several texts which explicitly state that thought

that consciousness objectify what it seeks to know, that is, that it create a distance between itself and its object. On the other hand, Bergson suggests that intuition is a kind of reflection which relies upon the "coincidence" between knower and known. (Creative Mind, p. 32) Seemingly unaware of the implications of reflection, Bergson fails to confront the problem and, as a consequence, also fails to resolve it. In situating Bergson within the context of phenomenology, VanPeursen introduces the issue but lends it only brief discussion. C. A. VanPeursen, "Henri Bergson, phenomenologie de la perception," Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale, LXV (1960), p. 323.

⁵⁰Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 21, 22, 24, 56.

⁵¹Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 164; Creative Evolution, pp. 42-43; Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 61; Creative Mind, pp. 42, 120.

⁵²Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 30, 37.

could occur in the absence of conceptual symbols⁵³—a dramatic statement which is never justified or explained—there are other, more sober texts which recommend that the concepts of intellectual analysis be replaced by "new concepts," which are "supple, mobile, almost fluid representations always ready to mold themselves on the fleeting forms of intuition."⁵⁴

Regretably, this notion of the "fluid concept," which is the mainstay of the intuitive method, is never explicitly illustrated nor defined. Its interpretation is unquestionably crucial to the theory of intuition, since the concept is integral to the processes of thought and expression. Our approach in deciphering this most obscure suggestion will be, first of all, to examine Bergson's occasional references to "fluid concepts" in an effort to delineate their essential features, and then in the following chapter to analyze our conventional expressive forms to determine the extent to which the new concept can be articulated in language, music and art. Thus, once the basic characteristics of the fluid concept are defined, it then will be possible to specify what forms of expression, if any, are appropriate to them.

⁵³See Chapter II, n. 50.

⁵⁴Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 30. Cf. pp. 37, 51; Creative Evolution, p. 55; Creative Mind, pp. 29, 31, 44-45; Two Sources, p. 254.

The guidelines which Bergson establishes for the "fluid concept" are, quite predictably, designed to overcome the problems of the ordinary concept employed in analysis. Consequently, the new concept must "be cut to the exact measure of the object,"⁵⁵ it must be "a concept which is appropriate to that object alone, a concept which can yet hardly be called a concept, since it applies to this one thing."⁵⁶ In other words, the concept must be tailored to the individual object, and must sacrifice the generality which ordinarily makes it applicable to a number of similar things.⁵⁷ Furthermore, the new concept must be fluid, that is, "capable of following reality in all its sinuousities and of adopting the very movement of the inward life of things."⁵⁸ Clearly, if the new concept is to facilitate our intuitive grasp of the enduring world, it must abandon both the generality and the rigidity which, in analysis, are so essential to it.

Although Bergson very plainly sets out these characteristics of the new concept, he never explains how the ordinary concept should be altered to fit them. The only thing

⁵⁵Bergson, Creative Mind, p. 29.

⁵⁶Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 37.

⁵⁷Cf. Chapter II, pp. 41-43. By contrast, the concept employed in analysis sacrifices the particular for the sake of the general.

⁵⁸Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 51.

about which Bergson is definite is that the "fluid concept" is necessary to intuition. Underlying his faith in the fluid concept, and the intuitive method which it serves, is his tacit assumption that the mind can "reverse the direction of the operation by which it habitually thinks" and is able "perpetually to revise, or rather to recast, all its categories."⁵⁹ Not only must the mind change its fundamental orientation to the world by forsaking its practical interests in favor of a pure, disinterested knowledge of the real, but it must revise its usual mode of perception by giving up its external point of view for coincidence with the object, it must replace the static concepts by which it ordinarily thinks with new, fluid concepts, and finally it must devise forms of expression which are appropriate to the demands of the new concept. Although Bergson frequently remarks upon the difficulty of this procedure,⁶⁰ he argues that the structure of the mind is not invariable, and whatever the mind can do it can also undo.⁶¹ Despite the habitual tendencies of the mind to conform to the analytical

⁵⁹Bergson consistently speaks of intuition, not as an automatic "flash" understanding, but as a process of thought requiring effort. (Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 47, 60; Creative Mind, p. 35)

⁶⁰Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 51. Cf. pp. 38, 45, 52; Matter and Memory, pp. 240-41; Creative Evolution, pp. 35, 178, 339, 341; Creative Mind, pp. 61, 70, 142.

⁶¹Bergson, Creative Mind, pp. 28-29, 70-73, 128.

method, Bergson maintains that this does not preclude the possibility of one's thinking intuitively and obtaining a direct, immediate grasp of the concrete duration of things.

Bergson's epistemological theory of intuition is indefensible philosophically unless the notion of "fluid concept" can be concretely illustrated and shown to be viable. Hanging in the balance is not only the justification of the intuitive method, but the validity of the metaphysical claims which depend upon it. Bergson's arguments on behalf of the duration of consciousness and the external world presuppose the mind's ability to work intuitively, that is, to rid itself of those cognitive elements which divest duration of its concreteness and its continuous movement. In turn, the mind's ability to apprehend duration as duration shows that it is able to transcend the spatial categories of the intellect and employ the simple, direct method of intuition. The implicit circularity of Bergson's position can only be broken by determining the tenability of the intuitive method—an argument which depends upon giving some specific sense to the theory of the "fluid concept."

CHAPTER III

FLUID FORMS OF EXPRESSION:

LANGUAGE, MUSIC AND ART

The preceding analysis of Bergson's metaphysics and epistemology enables us now to formulate the problem of expression in more precise terms. As Bergson establishes a metaphysics of duration, he begins to question how an essentially temporal world, which is continuously moving and changing, can be known. His epistemological distinction between intellectual analysis and intuition provides alternative responses to this question. On the one hand, the method of intellectual analysis fails to grasp duration as duration because of its predominantly practical interest, which requires that it abstract and stabilize the random particulars of experience to gain a foothold for action. Intuition, on the other hand, with no practical interest, seeks neither to abstract what is concrete nor to arrest what is fluid; it thereby achieves an immediate grasp of durée which is beyond the reach of analysis. Although Bergson's theory of intuition assures us that knowledge of the enduring world is possible, the question remains as to how these intuitive apprehensions are conceived and expressed.

Critics of Bergson often find that the method of intuition is simple—so simple in fact that it cannot be called a method at all. Intuition, they claim, is nothing more than "a flash understanding," an instantaneous, pre-reflective insight which it is impossible to symbolize or express.¹ This reading of Bergson is grossly incomplete. As I have argued in Chapter II, intuition is a cognitive process with recognizable stages which (Bergson all too vaguely suggests) does not dispense with symbols, but adopts a curious variety of them. When Bergson recommends that the mind employ "fluid concepts," he does not forsake conceptual symbols but encourages a radical rethinking of them; he does not deny the possibility of expressing one's intuition, but demands a reinterpretation of conventional expressive forms. This notion of the fluid concept, albeit obliquely stated in Bergson's texts, contains the germ of a new theory of human thought and expression.

Bergson so long belabored the problems of the conventional concept employed in analysis, that he gave little attention to delineating the new concept appropriate to intuition. One positive effect of this disproportionate

¹It is especially alarming that Susanne K. Langer, who is usually such an intelligent and perceptive reader of Bergson, subscribes to this view. Feeling and Form (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p. 375. Philosophy in a New Key (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 98. See also Jacques Maritain, Bergsonian Philosophy and Thomism (New York: Philosophical Library, 1955), p. 169.

interest was that, as he more clearly discerned the deficiencies of the ordinary concept, he became better able to establish the guidelines for what the new concept should be. Accordingly Bergson defines the new concept in terms of two characteristics: its ability to grasp the particularity and concreteness of an object; and its ability to become fluid, molding itself to the mobile duration of existing things. Unfortunately, these two criteria receive no specific illustration by Bergson. In a few scattered and fragmentary passages, Bergson does hint that language, music and the visual arts may be adapted to the requirements of the "fluid concept." The nature of this adaption, however, is never explained.

These enigmatic texts hold the key to Bergson's theory of the "new concept." If one can determine the linguistic, musical and artistic forms which accommodate the fluid concept and meet its requirements, then one will, in effect, disclose the logical form by which particularity and fluidity are conceived in intuition. By examining these three expressive forms, I hope to show that the notion of the "fluid concept" has a viable and intelligible philosophic meaning, and that, as a result, the intuitive process to which it is integral can be divested of its mystery and obscurity, and Bergson's rather innovative philosophy of expression can be seen in a clearer light.

Any attempt to decipher the "fluid concept" must

necessarily be venturesome. Bergson's treatment of this notion is so abstruse and incomplete that any coherent interpretation of it must reach beyond his texts. The subsequent discussion, therefore, will draw from certain aestheticians and philosophers of language whose theories of language, music and art seem consistent with Bergson's position, and yet capable of extending its basic meaning. These supplementary theories will lend Bergson the vocabulary and models for delineating the "fluid concept" which his own philosophy so sorely lacks.

Language

When Bergson criticizes language for its static and general character, he is referring to what linguists and aestheticians call the discursiveness of language. Susanne K. Langer offers a classic description of discursiveness in her early work Philosophy in a New Key (1942):

Language in the strict sense is essentially discursive; it has permanent units of meaning which are combinable into larger units; it has fixed equivalences that make definition and translation possible; its connotations are general, so that it requires non-verbal acts, like pointing, looking, or emphatic voice-inflections, to assign specific denotations to its terms.²

Bergson's entire critique of conceptual thought and its linguistic symbolism focuses precisely on these two features of ordinary semantics, namely, that the word is a "permanent

²Susanne K. Langer, Philosophy in a New Key, pp. 96-97. Italics mine.

unit of meaning" which, once defined, is relatively invariable; and further, that the word exhibits generality in so far as its meaning is broad enough to encompass numerous particular things.³ The stability characteristic of word meanings is also evident in the form of words and the syntactical structure of propositions. Langer's description of the formal properties of discursive language exactly fits Bergson's model of a linear, spatial symbolism:

words have a linear, discrete, successive order; they are strung together one after another like beads on a rosary; beyond the very limited meanings of inflections which can be incorporated in the words themselves, we cannot talk in simultaneous bunches of names. We must name one thing and then another . . . all language has a form which requires us to string out our ideas even though their objects rest one within the other. . . . This property of verbal symbolism is known as discursiveness; by reason of it, only thoughts which can be arranged in this particular order can be spoken at all . . .⁴

The demarcation and isolation of words within definite

³Bergson's criticism of discursive language bears principally upon its referential uses, its naming or denoting of things. Since Ludwig Wittgenstein in his Philosophical Investigations (1945-49) first challenged the theory that the principal function of language is naming, philosophers have recognized that its uses are far broader than simple reference. John Austin, for example, discusses "performative" language, such as promising, rebuking, betting, vowing, pardoning, thanking, predicting and apologizing, in which the words are performing an act rather than referring to the performance itself. Such analysis points to the fact that language has multiple uses, only one of which is that of denoting and naming. Bergson's insensitivity to these distinctions is explained by the fact that his own work predates these discoveries.

⁴Philosophy in a New Key, pp. 80-81.

boundaries betray the essentially static character of discursive linguistic forms. When the mind, operating according to its cinematographical habits, strings together these discrete units in propositions, there results only a linear succession of immobilities, external and in juxtaposition to one another. In short, discursive language is a type of expression which, being relatively invariable in form and meaning, renders static whatever is fluid and mobile, and being general in its signification, never exactly expresses the particular features of individual objects. As Bergson criticizes language for failing to deliver fully the enduring world one grasps immediately in intuition, he is criticizing the fundamental discursiveness of ordinary language.

When Bergson recommends that intuition abandon the ordinary concepts of analysis and create new fluid concepts, what he is suggesting, in terms of language, is that one replace discursive with non-discursive linguistic forms. Since Bergson's criticism of discursive language bears upon both the meaning and form of words, upon both semantics and syntax, it is necessary to explore non-discursive uses of language which pertain to word meanings, as well as to those involving structural or syntactical modifications. This twofold reassessment of language will show that its non-discursive expressive forms fulfill the requirements of Bergson's "fluid concept," thereby giving that elusive

notion some specific sense.

The classic move away from the permanence and generality of discursive word meanings is the metaphor. Each of the three major theories of metaphor I will review here explains at least in part how language can, on the level of meaning, achieve the concreteness and fluidity which Bergson recommends to the new concept.⁵ At times these theories simply will serve to give a sharper articulation to a vague suggestion Bergson has made; at other times, they will disclose possibilities which Bergson himself did not envision, but which remain consistent with his basic view. The three theories under consideration are:

1. The Comparison View of metaphor, a designation given by Max Black to describe the theory inherited from Aristotle. I will draw from the language studies of Max

⁵My designation of three theories of metaphor is slightly at variance with the four types of metaphor set out by Monroe C. Beardsley in his article "Metaphor," Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 1st ed. The discrepancy is due not to a disagreement on the fundamental issues so much as a different organization of them and different designations for them. While both of us treat the "Comparison View" by that name, my use of Black's "Interaction Theory" includes issues which Beardsley deals with separately under the "Iconic-Signification Theory" and the "Verbal Opposition Theory." I neglect to analyze explicitly the "Emotive Theory" to which Beardsley refers. Its exclusion is due to the serious problems with the theory which Beardsley outlines in his article. My addition of Wheelwright's "Diaphoric View" is grounded in the fact that it has important implications for Bergson's philosophy. In his "Verbal Opposition Theory" Beardsley recognizes the dynamics of diaphor, but fails to define fully its distinctive work.

Black, Susanne Langer and Philip Wheelwright to explain the essential features of the comparison view. While Bergson explicitly acknowledges that this metaphoric use of language achieves a certain concreteness in grasping its objects, he is critical of the inherent generality from which it never entirely escapes.

2. The second theory, which involves a reinterpretation of the first, holds more promise. Once again, Black's descriptive title, the Interaction View, is most apt. Both Black and Wheelwright suggest that a close look at the workings of the conventional metaphor will show that a vital tension between the metaphoric word and its object circumvents the problem of generality and, in addition, accounts for a semantic fluidity unattainable in the simpler comparison view.

3. Third is a theory for which there is, as yet, no convenient label. Wheelwright's term Diaphor will have to suffice. Both Wheelwright and Langer analyze the effect of accumulating diverse images to describe a single object, person or event. Bergson alludes to this view, and, although he recognizes its strength, he does not see its full import for the theory of the fluid concept.

Comparison View

The Comparison View of metaphor is first enunciated in Aristotle's Poetics: "Metaphor consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else." (1947^b) This

terse explanation survives in contemporary theories of language where it is amplified and given more definite description. In Philosophy in a New Key, Susanne Langer explains metaphor as the use of one word, for which there is a precise literal meaning, to denote another kind of object or event in a non-literal or figurative sense. Metaphor consists in taking a word or phrase whose meaning is comprehensible and transferring it to something which "has no name of its own."⁶ Philip Wheelwright describes the same metaphorical use of language, but broadens it to include reference to little known, as well as unknown, aspects of experience. For this type of metaphor, he prefers the more exact term epiphor.

Epiphoric metaphor starts by assuming a usual meaning for a word; it then applies this word to something else on the basis of, and in order to indicate, a comparison with what is familiar. The semantic "movement" (phora) here is characteristically from a more concrete and readily graspable image "over on to" (epi) what is perhaps vaguer, more problematic, or more strange.⁷

⁶Philosophy in a New Key, pp. 139-41. In tracing the life of a metaphor, Langer notes its eventual obsolescence. "Every new experience or new idea about things, evokes first of all some metaphorical expression. As the idea becomes familiar, this expression 'fades' to a new, literal use." (p. 141) In the context of Philosophy in a New Key, Langer adopts her theory of metaphor from Philip Wegener, Untersuchungen über die Grundfragen des Sprachlebens, 1885.

⁷Philip Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality, (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1962), pp. 72-73. Cf. James M. Edie, "Expression and Metaphor," Philosophical and Phenomenological Research, XXIII (June, 1963), 547-48.

Epiphor occurs in the semantic transference, in the "movement" of the familiar image "over on to" the less well known object to which it is compared. For example, when we say "A mighty fortress is our God," we are comparing the relatively unknown and ineffable God to a "mighty fortress," attempting thereby to convey His strength and majesty. The fortress does not give a literal definition of God, but makes him more intelligible by suggesting his likeness to a familiar object.

In his book Models and Metaphors from which the term "comparison view" is taken, Max Black offers an explanation of metaphor which is generally commensurate with those already cited.⁸ There are two additional elaborations which Black's discussion offers. First of all, his example "Richard is a lion" suggests that both terms of the comparison can be familiar, in which case the metaphor is something other than the application of a familiar word to an unfamiliar object. The lion-like features of Richard are

⁸Max Black, Models and Metaphors, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1962), pp. 35-36. Black finds the "comparison view" to be a particular form of the broader "substitution view" of metaphor. The distinction is of minor importance. In the "substitution view" the metaphoric word is used in place of a literal designation, since none is available. There is, in this case simply a substitution of one word for another. The "comparison view" is only a more complex form of substitution wherein the likeness between the metaphoric word and its referent is implied. Similarly, "the metaphorical statement might be replaced by an equivalent literal comparison."

not necessarily discovered for the first time, as if unknown, but they are merely accentuated when his likeness to the lion is drawn. Secondly, Black emphasizes that such "a metaphor consists in the presentation of the underlying analogy or similarity" between the subject and the metaphoric word by which it is described. The characteristics which the predicate term denotes and connotes are then transferred to the subject. Although this view of metaphor "as condensed simile or comparison" is quite popular, Black finds it simplistic in so far as the metaphoric word or phrase is merely a substitute or proxy for one or more literal statements by which it could be readily replaced.⁹ The metaphoric word is simply a stand-in for a more elaborate literal paraphrase.

In all instances of the comparative metaphor—whether it applies to what is unknown, vaguely known or familiar—it has at least this advantage, that it gives a vivid concrete sense of the object to which it refers. Bergson himself explicitly recognizes this metaphoric use of language and finds that, unlike the ordinary concept which is general and abstract, the metaphor or "image" as he prefers to call

⁹Models and Metaphors, pp. 35-36.

it,¹⁰ "keeps us in the concrete."¹¹ For example, when Bergson describes duration by comparing it to "the unrolling of a coil," "a myriad-tinted spectrum" or "an elastic body," he attempts to provide images of his metaphysical durée which will make more intelligible and more tangible its basic features.¹² Rather than relying exclusively on abstract terminology, Bergson draws a comparison with familiar, accessible objects from everyday life to evoke a sense of what duration is.

But even to Bergson the limitations of the metaphor are evident. In at least one respect, it is prone to the same deficiency as the ordinary concept. Since the image, like the concept, involves comparison it is necessarily incomplete, expressing some dimensions of its object while omitting others.¹³ Bergson's argument is that comparison makes manifest a resemblance, "resemblance is a property of the object, and as a property has every appearance of

¹⁰Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 30; Creative Evolution, p. 348; Creative Mind, pp. 42-43, 80. Bergson makes a crucial distinction between a "present image" or object, and a "represented image" or symbol of an object. Obviously the second meaning is operative here.

¹¹Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 27, Cf. Creative Mind, pp. 42-43.

¹²Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 25-26.

¹³Ibid., p. 27.

being part of the object which possesses it.¹⁴ Any comparison requires that an image be distinct from its object, and yet similar to it; if an image were identical to its object, or yet if an image did not somehow resemble it, there would be no basis for comparison. Consequently an image discloses those aspects of an object with which it bears resemblance, but reveals nothing of those aspects with which it has no affinity. Thus, Bergson finds that each of the images he employs to describe duration gives only a partial view of what duration is. One image expresses its heterogeneity but sacrifices its continuous movement; the other expresses movement but sacrifices heterogeneity.

If I use the comparison of the spectrum with its thousand shades, I have before me a thing already made, whilst duration is continually in the making. If I think of an elastic which is being stretched, or of a spring which is extended or relaxed, I forget the richness of color, characteristic of duration that is lived, to see only the simple movement by which consciousness passes from one shade to another.¹⁵

Bergson finds that no single comparison can convey the unity and multiplicity of an enduring process without neglecting one aspect or the other. Since the image is both like and

¹⁴Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 27. When Bergson states that "resemblance is a property of the object," what he means is that resemblance is a relational property which the objects possess insofar as they are related through the metaphoric comparison.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 27.

unlike the object to which it is compared, it is able to give a concrete sense only of the particular properties they share. Accordingly the comparative metaphor is always incomplete.

A second criticism of the metaphor is leveled by Max Black. It is most damaging to Bergson's cause because it questions the concreteness he is trying to affirm. Black states that "The main objection against a comparison view is that it suffers from a vagueness that borders on vacuity . . . likeness always admits of degrees." Black argues that metaphor is incapable of precision; in fact we use metaphor in such cases where precision is unattainable.¹⁶ The previous comparison between God and "a mighty fortress" makes the point obvious. While "a mighty fortress" vividly suggests certain characteristics of God and brings them into clearer focus, it does not enumerate them nor give them explicit description. A metaphor is essentially evocative. It calls forth certain features of its object, but does not delineate them with scientific exactitude.

What does a metaphoric comparison contribute to Bergson's "fluid concept?" Does it achieve the concrete and fluid grasp of the objects that Bergson is seeking? The metaphor clearly moves away from bland abstraction toward more vital and more concrete imagery, but this move

¹⁶Black, Models and Metaphors, p. 37.

appears to be limited in what it achieves. If Bergson's criticism is accurate, comparison does not deliver its object entirely, though it does make several of its traits more recognizable and more immediate. Black's criticism raises more serious problems since it attacks the claim to concreteness which Bergson presumes. Black seems to be correct in suggesting that the metaphor is a poor literal substitute—that it is attended with a certain semantic ambiguity that makes it inexact and elusive. This is, to Black's mind, precisely the problem in viewing metaphor as a proxy for literal meaning. One is in effect asking the metaphor to be something it is not intended to be. What is at stake is not the concreteness of the metaphoric image at all, but its inability to be reduced to an exact literal equivalent. The comparison view makes the fatal mistake of assuming that a literal translation of the metaphor is possible, even desirable. The two subsequent theories of metaphor will show that it is not. By developing a more sophisticated, incisive view of the workings of metaphor, the criticisms made by both Bergson and Black are, to a large extent, circumvented by more adequate linguistic formulations for the "fluid concept."

Interaction View

The Interaction View of metaphor is a designation once again borrowed from Max Black, who, in turn, credits

I. A. Richards with the fundamentals of the theory.¹⁷ Its basic tenet is that an expression like "Man is a wolf" works metaphorically due to a semantic interaction between the two terms. Black claims that attached to the word "wolf" is what he calls a system of associated commonplaces, which includes everything held to be true about wolves which would immediately come to one's mind upon hearing the word.¹⁸ While having this store of associations presumes some familiarity with the concept "wolf," it does not require a knowledge of the standard dictionary meaning nor a firm sense of its literal denotative uses. As Black explains, "the system of commonplaces may include half-truths or downright mistakes . . . but the important thing for the metaphor's effectiveness is not that the commonplaces shall be true, but that they should be readily and freely evoked."¹⁹ The metaphorical expression "Man is a wolf," calls up "the wolf-system of related commonplaces" and extends them to the principal subject, man.

¹⁷ See Max Black, Models and Metaphors, pp. 38-44. Cf. I. A. Richards, The Philosophy of Rhetoric (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 89-138.

¹⁸ Models and Metaphors, p. 40.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 40. Black does allow that a novelist or poet can "establish a novel pattern of implications for the literal uses of the key expressions prior to using them as vehicles for his metaphors." In other words, "Metaphors can be supported by specially constructed systems of implications, as well as by accepted commonplaces." (p. 43)

A suitable hearer will be led by the wolf-system of implications to construct a corresponding system of implications about the principal subject. But these implications will not be those comprised in the commonplaces normally implied by literal uses of "man." . . . Any human traits that can without undue strain be talked about in "wolf-language" will be rendered prominent, and any that cannot will be pushed into the background. The wolf-metaphor suppresses some details, emphasizes others—in short, organizes our view of man.²⁰

Black sees the metaphoric word as a kind of filter through which the principal subject is seen. What occurs is a transformation of the literal meanings of both terms: the subject, man, is not given a literal definition, but is characterized by the rich, though startling implications of the predicate "wolf;" the term "wolf" accordingly is applied in a non-literal sense, exploring the wide range of associations which hover over the word. The result is a semantic blend, a new "system" of meaning, which is irreducible to a literal translation of either term.²¹

²⁰Models and Metaphors, p. 41.

²¹See Models and Metaphors, p. 46. "Suppose we try to state the cognitive content of an interaction-metaphor in 'plain language.' Up to a point, we may succeed in stating a number of relevant relations between the two subjects But the set of literal statements so obtained will not have the same power to inform and enlighten as the original. For one thing, the implications, previously left for a suitable reader to educe for himself, with a nice feeling for their relative priorities and degrees of importance, are now presented explicitly as though having equal weight. The literal paraphrase inevitably says too much—and with the wrong emphasis. One of the points I most wish to stress is that the loss in such cases is a loss in cognitive content; the relevant weakness of the literal paraphrase is not that it may be tiresomely prolix or boringly

A similar theory of semantic interaction is developed by Philip Wheelwright.²² He maintains that words overcome the rigidity of their discursive meanings by plurisignation, which occurs when

more than one meaning is suggested simultaneously by a certain word or phrase or image. Or, more characteristically, there may be a group of verbal symbols, put together in a certain syntax and suggesting certain images, some more overtly than others, with the result that the interplay of meanings and half-meanings is far more copious than any literal paraphrase could ever formulate.²³

Wheelwright joins Black in recognizing in language the same semantic possibilities: that a single image or set of images can exploit the multiple meanings which attend them, and, when used effectively, can create a vast "interplay" of associations. Plurisignation involves precisely this mobilization and blend of meanings, which always exceeds

explicit (or deficient in qualities of style); it fails to give the insight that the metaphor did."

This untranslatability of metaphor has given rise to what philosophers call the Double-Language thesis, which holds that there are two different forms of language, the literal and the metaphorical, each of which is irreducible to the other. Monroe Beardsley is correct in finding the Double-Language thesis operative in Bergson's philosophy. As he states, "there is a language of mechanism and a whole distinct language of the élan vital;" the former is clearly the more literal discursive language, the latter the language of metaphor. (Beardsley, "Metaphor.")

²²The theory is first introduced by Wheelwright's Metaphor and Reality, pp. 57-65, and is more fully developed in his later work The Burning Fountain (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), pp. 115-19.

²³Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality, p. 57.

what the word or phrase literally says.²⁴

The interaction view of metaphor has this advantage, that it accounts for a semantic fluidity, an interplay of word meanings, which is infinitely more complex and effective than the simple substitution of one word for another proposed in the comparison view. The interaction view acknowledges that words are a constellation of denotations, connotations and commonplace associations. A metaphoric comparison evokes these multiple meanings of the terms compared and incites their interplay. What results is a new metaphorical meaning with a unique emotional texture which is irreducible to the sum of the meanings of the respective terms. The success of the metaphor conceived as a dynamic interaction is hard to predict, principally because it rests on subjective factors. To one who is semi-literate or vaguely familiar with the language, or to one whose range of experience is limited, a metaphorical expression may

²⁴Langer, Feeling and Form, p. 242. Langer, borrowing the vocabulary of Freud, speaks of over-determination of words, meaning thereby that the same word can have more than one import. An interesting addition to the theories of Black and Wheelwright is the "ambivalence" of words, their power to express at once two contradictory affects. As Langer states, "I believe the power of artistic forms to be emotionally ambivalent springs from the fact that emotional opposites—joy and grief, desire and fear, and so forth—are often very similar in their dynamic structure, and reminiscent of each other. Small shifts of expression can bring them together, and show their intimate relations to each other, whereas literal description can only emphasize their separateness."

border on total meaninglessness; on the other hand, to another who knows the language well and whose long experience has built up a strong store of "commonplace associations," the simplest metaphorical phrase can be highly suggestive and rich in meaning. One's ability to exploit the full sense of the metaphoric comparison to a large extent determines the depth of meaning it finally delivers.

But how concrete and complete a grasp of an object does this semantic fluidity allow? There is little doubt that calling a man a wolf is more concrete and vivid than saying, more prosaically, that he is dangerous and quick to anger. The term "wolf," charged with emotional overtones and a wealth of associations, gives certain of the man's characteristics an immediacy and presence which less figurative language is not empowered to do. Considerably more problematic, however, is the question of how complete a grasp of an object one gains by any metaphorical expression. As Bergson recognizes, a comparison exaggerates some features of its object, while others recede and go unnoticed. This partiality can only be remedied by a third type of metaphor which collects several images around a particular object, evoking its full particularity by a fusion of traits borrowed from these numerous comparisons.

Diaphoric View

In order to identify this third type of metaphor, I borrow Philip Wheelwright's term diaphor. Wheelwright

explains that in diaphor "the 'movement' (phora) is 'through' (dia) certain particulars of experience (actual or imagined) in a fresh way, producing new meaning by juxtaposition alone."²⁵ This is the familiar technique of the novelist and poet who gather numerous diverse images which converge to evoke a particular person, feeling or place. Susanne Langer offers the most lucid analysis of how diaphor actually works. Her example is a Chinese poem "A Farewell in the Evening Rain."

Is it raining on the river all the way to Ch'u?--
 The evening bell comes to us from Nan-king.
 Your wet sail drags and is loath to be going
 And shadowy birds are flying slow.
 We cannot see the deep ocean-gate--
 Only the boughs of Pu-kou, newly dripping.
 Likewise, because of our great love,
 There are threads of water on our faces.²⁶

Langer finds that all imagery in the poem works together to create a single virtual event, a semblance of the actual experience of lovers departing. The poet is not merely describing a setting, he is building image upon image—each tinged with weightiness and sadness—which all together evoke the deep emotion which attends "farewell." As Langer explains,

The rain on the river, in the sails, on the obstructing

²⁵Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality, p. 78. Cf. p. 72 where Wheelwright more accurately explains the work of diaphor as involving not only the juxtaposition of images but also their synthesis.

²⁶Langer, Feeling and Form, p. 215.

boughs, finally becomes a flow of tears. It is brought in through the poem, in approximately every other line, so that the further items—the bell, the shadowy birds, the invisible ocean-gate—merge with it, and are consequently gathered up with it into the great love for which the whole poem is weeping. Furthermore, those apparently casual local events interspersed between the rain-lines are all symbols of the bond that makes parting painful. Nan-king is calling; the sail is heavy, sailing is hard; the birds, which are going away, are slow, and they are shadowy—The shadow; the "deep ocean-gate," the greater place that is Li Ts'ao's next destination, is not to be seen for the near precious place, "the boughs of Pu-kou," obstructing all interest in the venture. And so the apparently simple description builds up to the confession of human feeling . . .²⁷

Langer's explication clearly shows how the poem's diverse images combine to create the feeling of sorrow. At no time does the poet explicitly refer to the emotion—there is no literal description of it. Rather, its several images work together metaphorically to evoke the feeling itself. In Wheelwright's terminology, the sadness of the farewell is the "presiding image," or perhaps better, the "presiding theme" which creates the diaphoric synthesis.²⁸ The unity of the poem is intrinsic to the imagery itself. Each image within the poem, in its distinctive way, points to the same

²⁷Feeling and Form, pp. 215-16.

²⁸Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality, p. 83. Langer adds that even in poems like T. S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" where the imagery is disjointed, the reader should be able to find its convergence in a definite type of "presented 'world.'" If this focus is unattainable, Langer suggests that there is either something wrong with the poem or with the reader's literary comprehension. (Feeling and Form, p. 217)

presiding emotion. Taken together, they form one coherent metaphorical expression for the experience and feeling of farewell.²⁹

With much less attention to how the diaphoric synthesis occurs, Bergson himself finds the use of diaphor advantageous. Having recognized the inadequacy of employing any one image to deliver fully the notion of pure duration, Bergson goes on to suggest that numerous, diverse images together may facilitate a more complete grasp of pure duration. As he states in Introduction to Metaphysics,

No image can replace the intuition of duration, but many diverse images borrowed from very different orders of things may, by the convergence of their action, direct consciousness to the precise point where there is a certain intuition to be seized.³⁰

The technique of the novelist and poet is similar. Bergson finds that they expand upon a single feeling or idea by creating numerous images which, in turn, combine to evoke the essential simplicity of the original intuition.³¹ What

²⁹Wheelwright compares the workings of the diaphoric image to the combining of elements in nature. In some pre-historic time, when hydrogen atoms and oxygen atoms combined to produce water, a new substance came into existence through the synthesis of disparate elements; so too in literature, new constellations of previously unjoined images create new suggestions of meaning. (Metaphor and Reality, pp. 83-85)

³⁰Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 27-28.

³¹Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 15, 164; Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 22; Creative Evolution, pp. 228, 348.

Bergson is alluding to in these texts is the diaphoric theory of metaphor, the precise workings of which he never explains. The more incisive analysis of Wheelwright and Langer discussed above, accounting as they do for the unity of the diaphoric imagery, are necessary to substantiate and complete Bergson's vague suggestion.

What then does the diaphor contribute to Bergson's theory of the "new concept?" First of all, there is implicit in the diaphoric process a certain semantic fluidity, insofar as the meaning which finally emerges permeates, or "flows through," the multiple images which are collected to evoke it. That is one reason why there is often no single correct interpretation of a novel or poem. Its meaning is read off the several images the artist presents; when an interpreter emphasizes one image or set of images over another, or probes their import from a different perspective, there often are subtle shifts in the overall meaning. While the imagery in a unified poem obviously does not allow for just any random interpretation, it does provide for a latitude of possible interpretations within the limits of what the imagery can express.

The concreteness which Bergson requires of the "fluid concept" is evident here as it was in the comparison and interaction views. Whether one compares a man to a wolf or describes sorrow in terms of "shadowy birds flying slow" and "threads of water on our faces," one in either

case avoids the generality of more literal statements and creates instead a more vivid, tangible and immediate sense of the object expressed. Furthermore, Bergson intimates that when multiple images converge on a single reality, that reality is not only expressed more concretely, but also more completely. His instinct seems correct. If each of the several images accentuates certain characteristics of an object, the aspects it neglects can be emphasized by another, and so on indefinitely. The collective effect is a relatively complete grasp of the object, far exceeding that attained in either of the other uses of metaphor.

A final consideration in our study of the adaptability of language to the "fluid concept" is the prospect of a structural modification of language itself. When Bergson demands of the intuitive mind that it recast all its categories, do violence to itself and to language,³² he urges a radical restructuring of conventional discourse in which inert, individual words, with well-defined boundaries and meanings, stand side by side in predictable logical sequence. While there are those who argue that the form of words need not be adapted to their meaning, that words need not be harsh to express harshness or be wet to

³²See n. 59, Chapter II, especially Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 51; Creative Evolution, p. 35; Creative Mind, p. 61; Two Sources, p. 254.

express wetness,³³ their criticism seems to be directed toward a simple imitative technique like onomatopoeia rather than toward the more elaborate experimentation with linguistic form which has been undertaken successfully in contemporary literature. The latter will be especially significant for Bergson's theory by showing that liberation from rigid discursive forms can result in a liberation from the confines of static denotative meanings as well; the combined effect will be a linguistic fluidity and concreteness appropriate to the "new concept."

Bergson's explicit recommendation regarding the structural re-formation of language is cautious. Its focus is primarily upon the rhythm and flow of the sentence which, he suggests, determines its effectiveness in conveying a meaning.

The words may then have been well chosen, they will not convey the whole of what we wish to make them say if we do not succeed by the rhythm, by the punctuation, by the relative lengths of the sentences and parts of the sentences, by a particular dancing of the sentence, in making the reader's mind, continually guided by a series of nascent movements, describe a curve of thought and

³³I was first struck by this point while attending a lecture by Arthur Danto entitled "Language, God and Reality in Nietzsche's Philosophy" (Nietzsche Conference, DePaul University, Chicago, November 24, 1972). Danto made explicit reference to Bergson's naivete in assuming this direct correlation between word structure and word meaning. See also Susanne Langer, Philosophy in a New Key, p. 81; George Boas, "Bergson (1859-1941) and His Predecessors," Journal of the History of Ideas, XX (1959), 505.

feeling analogous to that we ourselves describe.³⁴

Susanne Langer, extending Bergson's basic insight, speaks of more radical structural changes which she describes as condensation of symbols: "it is essentially a fusion of forms themselves by intersection, contraction, elision, suppression and many other devices."³⁵ Langer proposes an interplay and fusion of word forms in a variety of ways, which involve not only slight syntactical modifications, but a fundamental breakdown of the word structures themselves.

The classic example of such an experiment with language is James Joyce's Finnegans Wake. In Part I, Joyce describes Finnegan:

Of the first was he to bear arms and a name:
Wassailly Booselaugh of Riesengeborg. His crest
of huroldry, in vert with ancillars, troubland,
argent, a hegoak, poursuivant, horrid, horned. His
scutschum fessed, with archers strung, helio, of
the second. Hootch is for husbandman handling his
how. Hohohoho, Mister Finn, you're going to be
Mister Finnagain! Comeday morn and, O, you're vine!

³⁴Bergson, Mind Energy, pp. 56-57. Archibald MacLeish makes the same point more clearly in Poetry and Experience (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1960), p. 23. "The poem's meaning is evoked by the structure of words-as-sounds rather than by the structure of words-as-meanings. And the enhancement of meaning, which we feel in any true poem, is a product, therefore, of the structure of sounds."

³⁵Langer, Feeling and Form, p. 244. Cf. Philosophy in a New Key, p. 133, n. 46, where Langer remarks upon the "conglomerations of words and babble" still found in drinking and cheering songs.

Sendday's eve and,ah,you're vinegar! Hahahaha,
Mister Funn, you're going to be fined again!³⁶

Indeed Joyce's scramble of sound and sense, his foreign words, half-words, non-words and all manner of neologism in effect "do violence to language." The result is a fluid rhythmic prose in which the ordinary form of words is disrupted and restructured in most unconventional ways. The semantic consequence of this, as the critic Eugene Jolas explains, is that Joyce "has been occupied in exploding the antique logic of words."³⁷ While the passage conveys a sense of *Finnegan*, numerous words therein cannot literally be defined. The meaning is "fluid" since it is evoked by the play of sound and rhythm and the vague suggestions of ordinary language.

Another more familiar example (for only the critics read Finnegans Wake) is Lewis Carroll's poem "Jabberwocky."

'Twas brillig, and the slithy troves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogroves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

³⁶James Joyce, Finnegans Wake (New York: The Viking Press, 1939), p. 5.

³⁷Eugene Jolas, "The Revolution of Language and James Joyce," James Joyce, Finnegans Wake: A Symposium (New York: New Directions, 1929), p. 83.

He took his vorpal sword in hand;
 Long time the manxome foe he sought--
 So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
 And stood awhile in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,
 The Jabberwock with eyes of flame,
 Came whiffing through the tulgey wood,
 And burbled as he came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
 The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
 He left it dead, and with its head
 He went galumphing back.

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
 Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
 O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"
 He chortled in his joy.

"Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
 Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
 All mimsy were the borogroves,³⁸
 And the mome raths outgrabe.

In undermining conventional word forms, Carroll adopts a more sensuous and playful language than does Joyce, whose prose is an intellectual exercise in deciphering layers of implications and multi-lingual puns. Like Joyce, however, Carroll not only achieves a stylistic fluidity but he simultaneously erodes the rigidity and generality characteristic of word meanings. Once the ordinary structure of word and syntax disappears, the relatively fixed meanings which result from formulating a definition and circumscribing words within a tidy denotative meaning begin to deteriorate. The meaning of the new "words" is fluid in the

³⁸ Lewis Carroll, The Annotated Alice (New York: Bramhall House, 1960), pp. 191, 197.

sense that it finds no firm and changeless definition. Rather, it is expressive by sound sense and rhythm, which play on conventional meanings while not being reducible to them. Since there is no general definition to which to appeal, the meaning of the "word" is specified by the context in which it appears. It takes on a particular sense in relation to the other non-words which surround it. Such experimental language, though untranslatable into the general terms of ordinary discursive language, does retain a communicative value. Consequently, with alterations in linguistic form, words and propositions assume a structural fluidity which, in turn, engenders a certain fluidity in meaning. In addition, the collapse of conventional forms and their denotative meanings results in a breakdown of semantic generality. Since every use of the new language is a peculiar constellation of meanings, it gains concreteness by the particular fusion of rhythms and sounds and half-meanings which is unique to every literary passage.

Language, therefore, contains several modes of expression which attain the semantic fluidity, concreteness, and thoroughness which Bergson requires of the "fluid concept." The three metaphoric uses of language, taken together, meet each of these criteria, whereas the collapse of conventional linguistic structure achieves concreteness, as well as a syntactical and semantic fluidity. Since

language is the principal vehicle for conceiving and expressing intuitive thought, these adaptations bear the burden of proof for the viability of the intuitive method. The "fluid concept," which is the vehicle of intuition, has attained, at least in terms of language, an intelligible and defensible philosophic meaning.

Music

According to Bergson, music is especially suited to expressing the fluid continuity of existing things. His observation is grounded in the fact that music is essentially temporal, and its sonorous movement through time exhibits a continuity and qualitative variation that makes it the very model of duration itself. Unfortunately, Bergson's view is seriously incomplete in that it deals only with music's formal properties of temporal continuity and heterogeneity, while neglecting its semantic power which is inseparable from them. By avoiding any reference to meaning in music, Bergson overlooks two additional characteristics which make music amenable to fluid conceptualization, namely, that music is fluid in meaning as well as form, and also that through its distinctive semantic it can express vividly our thoughts and feelings. By analyzing Bergson's comments on musical form, and by going beyond Bergson's texts to examine the fluidity and concreteness of musical meaning, I will show that music is a mode of expression entirely appropriate to Bergson's "fluid concept."

Bergson's discussion of music presumes that reading a musical score and listening to the music performed can be significantly different experiences. On the one hand, the musical score presents its reader with a linear succession of discrete notes which, when played, become translated into definite positions along a string or keyboard. Viewed as a system of ordered notations, music is obviously a type of symbolic representation whose juxtaposition of discrete points along a line is similar to the other spatial models which the intellect unsuccessfully employs to represent the continuous movement of time.³⁹ On the other hand, when listening to music without visualizing the score or keyboard, one experiences the interpenetration of sounds, their blend and flow into one another rather than their isolation and juxtaposition. It is this latter experience of music as a continuous temporal flow that leads Bergson to use music as an analogical model of the universal durée.⁴⁰

According to Bergson, continuity is evident when

³⁹Cf. Chapter II, p. 50.

⁴⁰Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 100, 106, 111, 125; Duration and Simultaneity, p. 44; Creative Mind, pp. 127, 147. Langer describes the temporal flow of music in aptly Bergsonian language: "motion is the essence of music . . . The realm in which tonal entities move is a realm of pure duration." (Feeling and Form, pp. 107, 109-10.) It is curious, therefore, that Langer errs by suggesting that Bergson never saw "that his 'concrete duration,' 'lived time,' is the prototype of 'musical time,' namely passage in its characteristic forms." (Feeling and Form, p. 115)

music is heard,

When we listen to a melody we have the purest impression of succession we could possibly have—an impression as far removed as possible from simultaneity—and yet it is the very continuity of the melody and the impossibility of breaking it up which make that impression upon us. If we cut it up into distinct notes, into so many "befores" and "afters," we are bringing spatial images into it and impregnating the succession with simultaneity.⁴¹

A piece of music is an organic sonorous whole. Its continuity resides, not in the fact that it is impossible to distinguish individual notes or that it is impossible to meet with brief pauses, but rather that every note or chord, every interval of soundlessness, contributes to the melodic progression and unity of the whole piece. The sounds and silences work together, creating a single rhythmic flow. Susanne Langer explains it precisely,

When a progression reaches a point of rest within a piece, the music does not therefore stand still, but moves on. It moves over static harmonies and persistent tones such as pedal points, and silences. Its forward drive may even carry it rhythmically beyond the last sound, as in some of Beethoven's works, e.g. in the finale of opus 9, no. 1, where the last measure is a silence.⁴²

Thus, while the written musical text represents the flow of time with discrete motionless symbols, the music itself restores the lost continuity by creating an auditory semblance

⁴¹Bergson, Creative Mind, p. 149. Cf. Time and Free Will, pp. 100, 125; Duration and Simultaneity, p. 44; Creative Mind, pp. 127, 147-48.

⁴²Langer, Feeling and Form, pp. 108-09. Cf. p. 113.

of pure duration.⁴³

The second characteristic that makes music analogous to Bergson's durée is its heterogeneity. The character of a given piece of music is determined by its tonal variation, its changing rhythm, its range of pitch and intensity.⁴⁴ When sound is completely homogeneous, it is heard as a humm or a buzz, and not as music at all. Accordingly, such colorations within the musical progression, together with the continuity which characterizes their deployment in time, constitute the two formal properties of music which make it an appropriate model of the universal durée.

The question of how music conveys a meaning is immensely more difficult to answer. At this point one must take leave of the Bergsonian texts, for although Bergson's comments on musical form invite a consideration of music's expressive power, his philosophy neither raises nor addresses questions of meaning.⁴⁵ My principal source on the subject will be Susanne Langer who not only presents one of the

⁴³Bergson also observes that the unity of music, like that of duration, is intrinsic to the process itself and not dependent upon an auxiliary unifying principle. (Creative Mind, pp. 127, 147)

⁴⁴Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 44.

⁴⁵For this reason, one finds commentators on Bergson such as Ian Alexander and Susanne Langer admitting that Bergson has no fully developed aesthetics. Ian W. Alexander, Bergson, Philosopher of Reflection (New York: Hillary House, 1957), p. 85; Langer, Feeling and Form, pp. 114-15.

most solid and thorough analyses of music in contemporary aesthetics, but who explicitly treats Bergson's position and draws out its implications. Since there are important differences in the way meaning is expressed in "program music" and in "absolute music," the following discussion will treat each of these forms separately.

Program Music

The ability of music to convey a meaning is clearly evident in at least one broad category of compositions called "program music." Such music is programmatic in so far as it is inspired by and suggestive of an extra-musical idea for which the music then provides an auditory semblance. As Langer explains, program music "deliberately imitates the clatter and cries of the market place, hoofbeats, clanging hammers, running brooks, nightingales and bells and the inevitable cuckoo."⁴⁶ While program music is commonly thought to have originated around the fourteenth century, its high-point is clearly reached in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. / Examples from this period are numerous: Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony (1809), Berlioz' Symphonie Fantastique (1831), Schumann's Carnaval (1834), Rimsky-Korsakov's The Flight of the Bumble Bee (1872), Debussy's La Mer (1903-05), Stravinsky's Firebird (1908) and finally,

⁴⁶Langer, Philosophy in a New Key, p. 220.

Respighi's The Fountains of Rome (1917).⁴⁷ Each of these various works depicts a specific scene, and several portray an entire narrative. How is it possible that musical tones, which have no semantic correlate, are yet capable of expressing a meaning?

Since a musical note is pure sound, in itself signifying nothing, it is curious that a combination of notes in deliberate patterns is evocative of meaning. As the above examples illustrate, music can express peasants merry-making or the moods of the sea, a firebird or a bumble bee. In such cases, the composer recreates objects and events in sound simply by imitating their essential activities. The listener is then led by the suggestive power of the rhythm and tone of the musical passage to envision what the composer portrays. The signification of "program music," then, resides in its auditory simulation of familiar objects; since it is essentially imitative, Langer finds it a rather naive, unsophisticated mode of expression.⁴⁸

Although "program music" may achieve signification by a rather simplistic technique, it confirms music as an expressive form, capable of articulating and communicating

⁴⁷Beethoven's Pastoral is widely considered to be the most outstanding example of program music.

⁴⁸Langer, Philosophy in a New Key, p. 220.

a meaning.⁴⁹ This fact is rich in implications for Bergson's "fluid concept." The manner in which Beethoven suggests a storm or Schumann depicts a masked ball is not altogether different from the workings of metaphor in language.⁵⁰ According to the Interaction View, when one states "Man is a wolf," he suggests a comparison which draws upon all possible associations of "man" and "wolf," and invites their interplay. A composer similarly implies a comparison between certain sounds and the familiar objects they suggest. The effect upon the attentive listener is that the music (like the metaphoric word) activates his "store of commonplace associations" which, by their convergence, vividly recreate the thunderous storm or the lavish ball which the composer is trying to portray. The effectiveness of this sound-imagery, just like the effectiveness of the word-imagery, depends upon the breadth and vividness of one's associations, as well as upon the ability of the listener to allow their imaginative play. The meaning that program music expresses, then, is fluid, since it is freely evoked and irreducible to a specific literal sense. How concrete a meaning music conveys, on the one hand, depends upon the genius of the composer to create sounds

⁴⁹This explains the common expression, "the language of music."

⁵⁰Beethoven, Pastoral Symphony, IV The Storm - Allegro; Schumann, Carnaval.

which fire the human imagination; on the other hand, it depends upon the receptiveness and responsiveness of the listener which, in turn, is limited by the "store of associations" from which he draws. Despite these subjective considerations, music is capable of expressing meanings which are fluid and concrete, thereby meeting the principal requirements of Bergson's "fluid concept."

Absolute Music

When one turns to the other end of the spectrum, "absolute music," signification is more difficult to explain. "Absolute music" is thoroughly non-programmatic; it is pure sound with no extramusical implications. Accordingly, meaning cannot be explained by the tendency of musical sound to imitate an object, but instead must be grounded in the music itself. The strength of Langer's theory of significance in music is precisely this: she is mindful of the distinction between programmatic and absolute music, and finds that the problem of signification occurs most authentically in the latter. Furthermore, she shifts attention away from the subjective factors mentioned above, and sets aside the problems of the composer and listener to explain meaning in terms of the music itself.⁵¹ Her approach

⁵¹In Philosophy in a New Key, Langer effectively refutes the psychoanalytic theory which finds significance in the self-expression of the composer, and the emotional-response theory which locates significance in the listener's emotional reaction. (pp. 206-218)

to the question of signification, therefore, is particularly suited to "absolute music."

According to Langer, all music has a definite logical form and a peculiar semantic of its own.⁵² Its conceptual content, Langer claims, is feeling.⁵³

If music has any significance, it is semantic, not symptomatic. Its "meaning" is evidently not that of a stimulus to evoke emotions, nor that of a signal to announce them; if it has an emotional content, it "has" its conceptual content—symbolically. It is not usually derived from affects nor intended for them; but, we may say that it is about them. Music is not the cause of⁵⁴ the cure of feelings, but their logical expression.

The expressive power of music cannot be adequately accounted for in terms of a stimulus-response theory of emotion—since music may, in fact, elicit no emotional response in the listener and yet it conveys a meaning. Langer argues that music need be neither derived from an affective disposition in the composer nor need it effect an emotional reaction in the listener. Rather, feeling is the conceptual content of music, "a logical picture of sentient life," which provides the listener with a conception of feeling, rather than an

⁵²Langer cites Schopenhauer as originating the theory that music is "a kind of Language" having a genuine conceptual content. Philosophy in a New Key, p. 219.

⁵³Bergson also suggests, in two brief passages, that music is expressive of feeling. Time and Free Will, p. 15; Two Sources, pp. 252-53.

⁵⁴Langer, Philosophy in a New Key, p. 218. Cf. p. 222.

immediate affective experience.⁵⁵ As Langer states, in music "the content [of emotion] has been symbolized for us, and what it invites is not emotional response, but insight."⁵⁶

How does music express this feeling if the notations which compose it cannot be literally defined and are not inherently meaningful? Langer finds that the ability of music to symbolize emotion resides in the fact "that musical structures logically resemble certain dynamic patterns of human experience."⁵⁷ Musical form, she suggests, is the embodiment of feeling, since

there are certain aspects of the so-called "inner life"—physical or mental—which have formal properties similar to those of music—patterns of motion and rest, of tension and release, of agreement and disagreement, preparation, fulfillment, excitation, sudden change, etc.⁵⁸

The expressive power of music lies in the fact that its formal properties are analogous to those of our subjective experience. The conceptual content of music resides precisely in the tonal patterns and rhythms of which it is composed. Our difficulty in recognizing significance in music is due largely to the fact that we are conditioned

⁵⁵Philosophy in a New Key, p. 222.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 223.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, p. 226.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 228.

to expect meanings to be namable and definable as they are in discursive language.⁵⁹ Music, on the contrary, has no literal meaning; it is what Langer calls an "unconsummated symbol."

Music at its highest, though clearly a symbolic form, is an unconsummated symbol. Articulation is its life, but not assertion; expressiveness, not expression. The actual function of meaning, which calls for permanent contents, is not fulfilled; for the assignment of one rather than another possible meaning to each form is never explicitly made.⁶⁰

Absolute music has an unconventional significative power. It is incapable of exact, literal translation, yet clearly it conveys, by its harmonies and dissonances, by its melodic progressions and abrupt changes, the very rhythm of the sentient life itself. It gives no precise delineations of feeling, but expresses instead its general forms. The musical semantic is characterized by a certain "ambivalence of content," whereby meaning is a vast interplay of evocative sounds. Langer explains it well:

Music is revealing, where words are obscuring, because it can have not only a content, but a transient play of contents. It can articulate feelings without becoming wedded to them. . . . the assignment of meaning is a shifting kaleidoscopic play, probably below the threshold of discursive thinking.⁶¹

The parallel between musical signification and the diaphor

⁵⁹Philosophy in a New Key, p. 228.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, p. 240.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, pp. 243-44. Italics mine.

in language is strikingly obvious. Just as the diaphor is an interplay of several images whose meanings converge to depict a particular object, so too the emotive overtones of musical sounds engage in a "kaleidoscopic play," and finally blend to express the dominant feeling which pervades the musical composition. This "transient play of contents" is both the weakness and the strength of musical symbolism. It is its weakness in so far as the emotion expressed is general and imprecise; it is its strength because this same thoroughly non-representational character of absolute music enables it to "be 'true' to the life of feeling in a way that language cannot."⁶² In summary, then, the semantic fluidity Bergson requires of the "new concept" seems to be thoroughly attained, since a single denotative meaning is a virtual impossibility given the nature of musical notation. The question of how concrete a grasp of feeling music offers is a bit more difficult to assess. The necessary vagueness and generality inherent in musical symbolism seems to argue against this possibility, yet anyone who has listened to a Beethoven sonata or a Chopin polonaise must acknowledge that one's insight into the life of feeling can be concrete and vivid indeed.

In conclusion, then, the criteria of fluidity and concreteness which Bergson establishes for the "new concept"

⁶²Philosophy in a New Key, p. 243.

are clearly fulfilled by music. As an expressive form whose medium is time itself, music is a thoroughly continuous movement and, as such, is the closest approximation to the fluidity of pure duration. On the level of meaning, music exhibits fluidity in so far as it freely evokes images and feelings, the interaction of which constitute a new semantic with no literal equivalent. Music grasps the concrete particularity of an object, event or feeling to the extent that the listener can be responsive to the music's evocative powers, and to the extent that the composer and performer can elicit that response.

Art

A final consideration in explicating Bergson's "fluid concept" is the visual arts of painting and sculpture which, at first glance, seem entirely inappropriate as expressive forms of the new concept. Even Bergson's few references to the arts reveal his cognizance of the problem.⁶³ First of all, the visual arts are spatial, and whether space be two-dimensional as in painting or three-dimensional as in sculpture, both media inherit the problems which infect all spatial symbolism. Just as the juxtaposition of points on a line extended in space cannot

⁶³ Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 15-16; Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 22, 32-33.

express the uninterrupted flow of time,⁶⁴ so too painting with its collection of static images, and sculpture with its organization of motionless forms, seem ill-suited to the representation of the intuited durée. As Bergson consistently argues, "the fixed placed side by side with the fixed will never constitute anything which has duration."⁶⁵

In addition to this formal inertia, the visual arts are also limited in the point of view they present. When looking at a painting, we are afforded only one invariable perspective on the artist's subject. Although we may observe a painting from near or far, high or low, right or left, we cannot alter the fundamental view which is already established on the canvas. We cannot get a profile of Leonardo's "Mona Lisa," nor can we ask the woman in Andrew Wyeth's "Christina's World" to turn around.⁶⁶ While free-standing sculpture allows us to utilize three-dimensional space—to move around the object and take various perspectives on it—we always remain external to the object at a specific point in space, unable to take more than a single

⁶⁴See Chapter I, pp. 11-12.

⁶⁵Bergson, Creative Mind, p. 16.

⁶⁶While the use of perspective in painting can create the illusion of three-dimensional space, the viewer cannot move around or behind objects to exploit that three-dimensionality.

view at a time.⁶⁷ Even if we were to exhaust the infinite number of possible points of view, which is unlikely, we would only return to the initial problem: the medium of the plastic arts presents only a single, frozen moment of its object. Although we can vary our point of view, we cannot vary the fixed attitude of the representation itself.⁶⁸ Painting and sculpture, therefore, being stable in form and selective in the perspectives they allow, seem incapable of expressing the fluidity and full particularity of an enduring world.

To regard a painting simply as a collection of lines and colors placed side by side on a canvas, or to regard sculpture as an extension of material shapes in space, is to overlook completely their function as symbolic forms. Whether the visual arts are objective or non-objective, representational or abstract, their lines, colors, textures, tones and shapes taken together embody a meaning. What is merely a collection of formal properties becomes significative when the disparate elements interact to form a unitary expression. This occurs, according to Langer, as the artist borrows forms from the real world, organizes them in

⁶⁷Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 22, 32-33.

⁶⁸See Chapter II, pp. 39-41. This is the same problem encountered in intellectual analysis when one assumes a point of view external to the object.

the virtual space of the painting or sculpture, and employs them to express vital and emotive conceptions.⁶⁹ In distinctly Bergsonian language, she describes the fusion of form and meaning which results.

This characteristic way in which the artist presents his formal structure in a single exemplification is, I think, what makes it impossible to divorce the logical form from its embodiment or expression. We never pass beyond the work of art, the vision, to something separately thinkable, the logical form, and from this to the meaning it conveys, a feeling that has this same form. The dynamic form of feeling is seen in the picture, not through it mediately; the feeling itself seems to be in the picture. Symbolic form, symbolic function, and symbolized import are all telescoped in one experience, a perception of beauty and an intuition of significance.⁷⁰

Langer's insistence on the integrity of the work of art dispels the notion of color, line, shape, etc. as elements which stand juxtaposed in space. There is no longer an external relation of mere proximity, but a tensive interplay which evokes a meaning.⁷¹ Just as the metaphoric images in a poem are unified by the presiding theme which pervades them,⁷² so too in the visual arts the formal ingredients do not stand indifferently side by side, but

⁶⁹Bergson too finds art an expression of feeling. Although the idea is never fully developed, it receives brief discussion in Time and Free Will, pp. 16-18.

⁷⁰Susanne Langer, Problems of Art, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), pp. 33-34. Cf. Feeling and Form, pp. 51-52.

⁷¹Cf. Alexander, Bergson, Philosopher of Reflection, p. 92.

⁷²See pp. 79-82.

interact to express the thought or feeling they symbolize. Examples from both representational and abstract art will show that the effect of this form-meaning interaction is not only a more fluid, but also more complete grasp of the subject they symbolize.

Representational art varies widely, from an extreme realism in which the artist is entirely faithful to his object, to vaguer, more suggestive portrayals which, while not faithful to their objects in every detail, do offer recognizable representations of them. However realistic a painting or sculpture, Bergson and Langer agree that it does not exist simply for the practical purpose of producing a flawless, literal description of a person, place or thing, (although this may well be among its accomplishments);⁷³ rather, its function as an artistic form is primarily to say something about the object, to convey to our understanding the feeling of its vital reality. For example, Michelangelo's David, while being of heroic proportions, is thoroughly realistic. The anatomical exactness which Michelangelo achieves is legendary. As the critic Frederick Hartt explains, every detail of arms, legs, torso and face are perfectly calculated to the posture and mood of the youthful figure.

The sinews of the neck seem to tense and relax, the

⁷³Bergson, Creative Mind, pp. 136-38; Langer, Feeling and Form, p. 51.

veins of the neck, hands, and wrists to fill, the nostrils to pinch, the belly muscles to contract and to shrink and erect, the whole proud being to quiver like a war horse that smells the battle.⁷⁴

The figure of David, however realistic, is not a lesson in human anatomy, but an expressive form in which every vein and muscle signifies "all the passionate drama of man's inner nature."⁷⁵ The parts of the body, their diverse shapes and textures, are not external and in juxtaposition to each other, but are tensively interrelated to convey a dramatic sense of the life and feeling of bold, impassioned youth. The formal elements embody the meaning, and the meaning resides in the organic unity of the formal elements. The result is not a static image, but a vital symbol of restlessness and tension. It does not eradicate movement and activity, but distills it. Thus, the single moment of the figure which Michelangelo presents is limiting only insofar as the viewer fails to perceive the whole range of life and feeling condensed within it. Its significative power depends not only upon the interplay of content and form in the sculpture itself, but also upon the ability of the viewer to be responsive to its presentation. Since the meaning conveyed by the statue emerges out of the dynamic interplay of its formal properties and our associations, it

⁷⁴Frederick Hartt, Michelangelo: The Complete Sculpture, (New York: Harry N. Adams, 1968), pp. 104-105.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 105.

is irreducible to any literal translation. Accordingly, even an inert, realistic form has vital symbolic powers which express, more deeply and more powerfully than any discursive formulation can, the fullness and fluidity of immediate experience.

Whether the art form is painting or sculpture, whether it is objective or non-objective, the same expressive possibilities exist. In the move away from highly representational art to more abstract visual forms, there is a liberation from our habitual ways of seeing by distorting familiar objects or even avoiding objective representation altogether.⁷⁶ By displacing our routine perceptions with novel, imaginative modes of thought and feeling, such modern movements as Impressionism, Expressionism, Cubism and Fauvism have attempted to enhance the evocative power of the visual arts. For example, Van Gogh's Wheat Fields and Cypress Trees, while still presenting the familiar objects the title suggests, does not afford a faithful, literal depiction of them. Yet, by the use of fluid lines, complementary colors and, above all, a coarse rhythmic texture, Van Gogh dramatically portrays the movement of clouds and cypress and wheat in the summer wind. What Van Gogh achieves

⁷⁶Bergson, Creative Mind, pp. 135-38. Bergson finds that the artist's role is precisely to extend our powers of perception by creating new ways of seeing. Bergson's earlier suggestion that intuition break with habitual modes of perception is well illustrated. See Chapter II, p. 59.

is not a literal transcription of objects, but the evocation of a vital emotional experience of them. In such objective but not entirely realistic art, the formal fluidity is obtained by the indulgence in lyrical color and line, and the objects are expressed fully and concretely due to the exaggeration of their most expressive features.

This principle of gaining expressive power by departing from familiar, literal representations is taken to its logical conclusion in totally non-objective, abstract art. From the numerous examples provided by the paintings of Jean Dubuffet, Jackson Pollock, Piet Mondriaan and the sculpture of Constanti Brancusi, Henry Moore, Alexander Calder and others, let us examine Pollock's Full Fathom Five. The predominant feeling in the painting is that of dense and gnarled confusion. The tangle of lines and the neutrality of color relieved only by a few smatterings of faint orange combine to create the presiding image. Without any objective reference whatsoever, Pollock expresses an emotional conception with definiteness by creating a chaos and tense resistance within the maze of line and color. What the painting demonstrates is that abstract art no less than representational visual forms is capable of expressing a meaning by the interaction of formal elements within a virtual space. While its images are divorced from the real world, its shapes, colors, textures and lines are rich with associations and highly evocative. By drawing from our

lived associations, the artist can often evoke a more dramatic and vivid conception than can a less imaginative, more realistic portrayal.

What this brief review of representational and abstract art has shown is that the artist mobilizes the static elements of line, color, shape and texture in order to convey a meaning. The movement or play among these formal properties themselves, not only gives fluid expression to the subject presented, but reaches beyond the inert and singular perspective portrayed on the canvas or in the sculpture to capture the very life of the idea or feeling it expresses. As with language and music, our responsiveness to the work of art will, in large part, determine how concrete and complete a grasp of its subject the visual form can allow. What is clear, however, is that the visual arts are capable of expressing our immediate experience, without sacrificing either its concrete particularity or its mobile durée. Accordingly both painting and sculpture qualify as expressive forms of Bergson's "fluid concept."

Language, music and art, then, each in their respective ways has accomplished the two objectives which Bergson set out for the new concept, namely, that it must be capable of "adopting the very movement of the inward life of things," and that it "must be cut to the exact measure of the object,"

grasping its full particularity,⁷⁷ The relative merits of these expressive forms are difficult to assess, principally because each has a distinctive semantic which is constituted by its own linguistic, auditory or artistic forms.

In terms of their capacity to express mobility, musical and artistic forms seem to occupy the far ends of the spectrum, the former being the most purely temporal of expressive forms and the latter being essentially inert and spatial. These extremes collapse, however, when the formal properties of music and art are analyzed in terms of their power to express a meaning. Art is no longer a juxtaposition of visual forms in space, but a field for their dynamic interplay. Art becomes a visual mobilization of color, shape and line which constitutes a unified thought or feeling. Thus art is not as distant from music as it first appears. Music similarly begins with static notations which, when translated into sound, blend and flow to create a meaning. Both achieve a semantic fluidity by means of a fluidity in form—although in art the movement is visual, whereas in music it is auditory.

In respect to the question of fluidity, language has certain affinities with both art and music. Like art, its basic structure is essentially spatial, its words and

⁷⁷Cf. Chapter II, p. 58.

sentences are set out side by side in linear fashion. Language, however, overcomes the inertness and spatiality of its formal properties as the connotations and denotations of words blend to form new meanings which, especially in the case of metaphor, create a complex and fluid semantic which is irreducible to the separate words of which it is composed. As with art, the formal inertia of language is overcome when its discrete parts mobilize to create a new constellation of meaning. Language, being an auditory as well as a visual form, attains a sonorous temporal flow whenever it is spoken. Language differs from music in one important respect. However fluid prose or poetry becomes, its individual units retain a distinctness insofar as each is intrinsically meaningful, whereas the notes in a musical composition only take on meaning in relation to one another as the sound unfolds. When the discrete meanings of words are broken down by a collapse of their form, however, language enjoys greater affinity with music, in that its individual units cease to be meaningful when taken alone and now derive expressive power only as their sounds and half-meanings blend and flow into one another.

How well language, music and art can express the concrete, particular features of their objects is more difficult to determine. When we consider a realistic painting or sculpture, or an exact linguistic description, both seem eminently capable of a detailed and quite specific

portrayal of their subject; program music, on the other hand, creates an auditory impression which is less literally explicit and more evocative. But if the preceding analysis of these expressive forms is correct, then the most literal depictions are not necessarily most capable of grasping reality in its full particularity. If reality is a fluid process of continuous change, as Bergson suggests, then literal descriptions fail precisely because they are too confining—because in an effort to pinpoint and specify an object or experience they forfeit its continuous mobility and vitality. Thus it is that metaphorical uses of language, and absolute music and abstract art may be capable of more faithful and more exact expressions of the immediately experienced world. Their expressive power lies in their ability to evoke our most vivid associations, to incite the imaginative play of our thoughts, feelings and memories. Their efficacy resides in their ability to call up these deeply personal associations which, in the process of their interaction, give a deep, comprehensive and concrete sense of the reality they symbolize.

My examination of the linguistic, musical and artistic forms of Bergson's "fluid concept" is now complete. My objective was to interpret and specify the nature of the new concept in order to accomplish several things: first to show that Bergson's notion of the "fluid concept" does have a positive content, since language, music and art, each

in varying degrees, fulfill its specific requirements; second, to show that the intuitive method, which is dependent for its operations upon the "fluid concept," is not simply a flash understanding incapable of symbolic representation but a viable mode of knowing with a wide range of symbolic forms. The linguistic, musical and artistic forms of the "fluid concept" provide logical forms whereby one can think intuitively and give overt expressions to these conceptualizations.⁷⁸ Finally, my aim was to show that, if the intuitive method is a viable mode of knowing, one could take seriously the disclosures based upon it. One such disclosure is the universal durée—the fundamental principle of Bergson's metaphysics. If pure duration can be grasped intuitively, the question remains as to how, if at all, such intuitive claims can be verified. I will consider this in the final chapter.

When Bergson recommends that philosophy adopt the intuitive method, some additional questions arise. In the context of our preceding discussion of the "fluid concepts" upon which intuition relies, and the linguistic and musical

⁷⁸Bergson fails to explicitly state whether one thinks linguistically, musically and artistically or whether one thinks according to unspecified "fluid concepts" which then find overt expression in these symbolic forms. The first interpretation is the only defensible one, since conception requires logical form and, even if this form is fluid, it marks one's advance beyond rudimentary perceptions, while also allowing for organized mental conceptions independent of their extra-mental expressions.

and artistic forms in which they find expression, Bergson's suggestion seems curious indeed. Does Bergson intend philosophy to become dissipated in poetry and novels, in symphonies and paintings, with no distinct identity of its own? Does this imply that philosophy should forsake its scientific rigor and precision for more artistic, metaphorical modes of thought? The implications of Bergson's epistemology and aesthetics for his theory of philosophic activity will be the topic of the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION: THE CHALLENGE TO PHILOSOPHY

Coextensive with Bergson's development of the theory of intuition is his proposal that philosophy, and in particular metaphysics, adopt the intuitive method. This recommendation is thoroughly consistent with Bergson's metaphysical and epistemological suppositions. According to Bergson, metaphysics seeks a pure, disinterested knowledge of reality as it essentially is—a continuous temporal flow. His epistemological distinction between intellectual analysis and intuition is clearly elaborated with the metaphysician in mind. Whereas intellectual analysis is a method of knowing which stabilizes and orders the fluid temporality of existing things in order to provide a firm foundation for action,¹ intuition is devoid of practical interest and designed to facilitate an immediate grasp of duration as duration.² Thus, the intuitive method is, by definition, commensurate with the objectives of metaphysics.

¹See Chapter II, pp. 47-48.

²Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 39-40. For Bergson the alternative is clear: "Either there is no

However logically coherent Bergson's recommendation is in terms of his other philosophical claims, it seems upon closer examination to pose more problems than it solves. Numerous questions arise concerning both the methodology and discourse of this new intuitive philosophy. First of all, does the theory of intuition, as described by Bergson, provide a method at all? Does Bergson establish a definite procedure which philosophers can employ to obtain knowledge about the world? If so, then how can intuitive disclosures be verified? Inseparable from these methodological considerations are questions pertaining to philosophic discourse. If ordinary discursive language is inappropriate to intuition, as Bergson suggests, then is the philosopher permitted, or even encouraged, to use non-discursive forms? Do music and art, which are similarly non-discursive, have any legitimate role in the philosophic enterprise? Does Bergson's suggestion for a discourse appropriate to intuition require that philosophy forsake its aim of clarity and precision, adopting artistic modes of expression which are more elusive and difficult to test?

A closer look at these questions hopefully will

philosophy possible, and all knowledge of things is a practical knowledge aimed at the profit to be drawn from them, or else philosophy consists in placing oneself within the object itself by an effort of intuition." Cf. Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 24, 27, 30, 37, 49, 51-52, 60; Mind-Energy, p. 6; Creative Evolution, pp. 34-35; Creative Mind, pp. 18, 30-32, 37, 61, 107-29, 138.

serve to integrate the metaphysical and epistemological issues previously elaborated in this study, to draw out the full implications of Bergson's rather innovative philosophy of expression, and finally, to give an overview of Bergson's theory of philosophic activity which pervades and unifies his other philosophic concerns.

Intuition as Philosophic Method

Speaking of Bergson as well as other intuitionist philosophers, Susanne Langer states, "intuition is not a 'method' at all, but an event."³ Her verdict is puzzling to the reader of Bergson who finds, from the Introduction to Metaphysics onward, countless references to intuition as a viable philosophic method. Several commentators on Bergson, such as Carr, Chevalier and Kahn, have taken seriously Bergson's suggestion and have offered substantial discussions of his intuitive methodology.⁴ My interpretation in this paper has sided with those who discover in Bergson's theory of intuition the delineation of a philosophic method; in addition to being swayed by Bergson's

³Langer, Feeling and Form, p. 378.

⁴H. Wildon Carr, The Philosophy of Change, pp. 1-19; Jacques Chevalier, "The Method, Intuition and the Philosophic Mind," Henri Bergson, trans. by Lilian A. Clare (New York: AMS Press, 1969), pp. 74-113; Sholom J. Kahn, "Henri Bergson's Method," Antioch Review, V (September, 1945), 440-51.

own explicit statements on the subject,⁵ I find that Bergson describes intuition, not simply as an "event," but as a formal procedure with definite stages, designed to accomplish a specific end.

As discussed at length in Chapter II, intuition is a cognitive process consisting of three stages.⁶ The first is perception in which the mind obtains a non-positional view of the object, by seizing it immediately as it is in itself. This direct apprehension requires that one perceive the object non-spatially, relinquishing one's external point of view in favor of "entering into" the object itself. In the second stage, one's original perceptions are raised to the level of conception where they obtain the logical form of the "fluid concept." At this stage, intuition has ceased to be a mere "event" and has taken on symbolic forms which make intuitive thinking, or conceiving, possible. Finally, the "fluid conceptions" receive overt expression in such media as language, music and art.⁷ This third stage confirms the fact that intuition is neither private

⁵See Chapter IV, n. 2.

⁶See Chapter II, pp. 52-60.

⁷The distinction between "fluid concepts" as forms of conception and as forms of expression is discussed in Chapter III, pp. 114-15. However, legitimate the epistemological distinction between conceiving and expressing, one should be mindful of Bergson's ambiguity as to the exact nature of the distinction.

nor incommunicable, but rather is able to adopt expressive forms which convey a meaning and which, especially in the case of music and art, have almost universal intelligibility.⁸ All three stages are unified by a single aim, to attain knowledge of reality as the pure duration that it is.

Intuition, therefore, meets the fundamental requirements of a formal method: it is an established procedure with recognizable stages, which occur in a definite logical sequence and cooperate toward a single end. Once delineated, these successive stages form an integral methodology which, at least in principle, is independent of the thematic considerations in the context of which it was framed.

Evaluation of this method is much more difficult than its description. One reason for this is that although Bergson's rationale for the intuitive method is clear, especially in view of his criticisms of intellectual analysis, its final test rests upon its implementation. While Bergson

⁸Music is among the most universal of expressive forms. Even if we must train our ear to appreciate the music of foreign cultures, such appreciation is facilitated by the fact that musical notation is not tied to any cultural semantic. While artistic symbols are somewhat more culture-bound, people most often seem capable of perceiving a universal element intrinsic to them which goes beyond the particular time and place in which the art was produced. The prominence of Oriental or African or primitive art in most American museums attests to this trans-cultural value of the artistic medium. Language is possibly the least universal in that words and their meanings are quite particular to the peoples who use them. However successful a translation may be, it can never deliver adequately the full sense of the original text.

has specified what needs to be accomplished, he is obscure on the crucial question of how. His theory of perception is a case in point. Bergson criticizes the analytical method for adopting a point of view external to its object, thereby introducing space and preventing the apprehension of pure time. One solution to this spatializing tendency is to relinquish one's outside point of view in preference to perceiving the object "from where it is, as it is in itself." But exactly how one avoids taking a point of view or how one enters into the object is never fully explained. Bergson's difficulty in setting out this first stage of the intuitive method is his inability to adequately account for its implementation. Similarly, at each stage Bergson defines the objectives of intuition, that it should enter into the object and that it should conceive and express the object as it is. Yet how this is to be accomplished is described only negatively. Bergson simply suggests that we avoid external points of view and avoid the static and partial concepts of analysis in our thought and expression. Thus, Bergson's problem is not that he has failed to provide a methodology, but that he has failed to delineate its procedures specifically and clearly enough to facilitate its use.

Another problem which besets the intuitive method is that of verification. If intuition is to be a viable method of knowing, Bergson must determine how the truth and accuracy of intuitive disclosures can be tested. Bergson's

account is twofold: first, he claims that there is a certain self-evidence to an intuition which is confirmed simply by its capacity to be expressed; and second, that the insight gained intuitively is verified when the method of intellectual analysis arrives at the same truth. These two suggestions bear further examination.

Bergson's earliest statement on the topic of verification occurs in 1911, in an essay on "Philosophical Intuition."

Doubtless everything is not equally verified or verifiable in what a philosophy brings us, and it is the essence of the philosophical method to demand that at many moments, on many points, the mind should take risks. But the philosopher runs the risk only because there are things of which he feels himself unshakeably certain. He will make us certain to the extent that he is able to communicate to us the intuition from which he draws his strength.⁹

Bergson is on shaky ground for several reasons. First of all, he claims that the element of risk in philosophic method explains "why everything is not equally verified or verifiable." Ordinarily, a tentative hypothesis initiates the verification process—either the original thesis is confirmed or denied as additional evidence is collected. Thus even though philosophy may involve risk, this does not obviate the need for verification, so much as establish its urgency.

Secondly, when Bergson states, "there are things of which the philosopher feels himself unshakeably certain,"

⁹Bergson, Creative Mind, pp. 123-24. Italics mine.

two further problems arise. One is that the grounds for the philosopher's initial certainty is unclear. Is his certainty established by a vague, pre-reflective insight or is it grounded in a deliberate process of reflection? This question introduces the problem of the fundamental nature of intuitive knowing which Bergson, in his own mind, seems never to have entirely resolved.¹⁰ Furthermore, when Bergson refers to the fact that "the philosopher feels himself unshakeably certain," he seems to be suggesting that intuitions are self-verifying, that their truth is evident to the person who is having the intuition. This, taken alone, is untenable. Not only is it impossible to prove or disprove the truth of such an intuition (except of course by having the intuition oneself), but even if the experience is had, there are no firm criteria by which truth and false can be discriminated.

Thirdly, Bergson states that others will be convinced of the philosopher's certainty only to the extent that he can communicate his intuition. Since communication is clearly necessary to establish the certainty of an intuition in the philosophic community, and since the most able vehicle for the expression of an intuitive thought is the "fluid concept," a philosopher's credibility finally rests upon his skill in manipulating those expressive forms which

¹⁰See Chapter IV, pp. 128-29 for a more detailed examination of this problem.

meet its requirements. Bergson also implies that an unexpressed or poorly expressed idea has no claim to certainty. The other assumption which his statement harbors is seriously in error. Bergson fails to acknowledge the crucial difference between a statement being true and being persuasive. Consequently, Bergson is led unawares to the implausible conclusion that an argument's persuasiveness is a mark of its truth. An example from Bergson's own philosophy readily shows how unsound a principle this is. Recognizing how compelling the theory of spatialized time has been, Bergson strenuously argues against its continued acceptance on the basis that it is an utterly false, distortive view of the temporal process. If a persuasive idea can thus be false, then persuasiveness is entirely inadequate as a measure of truth.

Bergson's second principle of verification at first might seem to rest on more solid ground. In this case, an intuitive apprehension is confirmed by the findings of intellectual analysis.

As the diver feels out the wreck on the sea floor that the aviator has pointed out from the air, so the intellect immersed in the conceptual environment verifies from point to point, by contact, analytically, what has been the object of a synthetic and super-intellectual vision.¹¹

Despite the difference between the intuitive and analytic

¹¹Bergson, Creative Mind, p. 64.

methodologies, which is the very foundation of Bergson's epistemology, he is insisting here upon their complementary functions. If intuition is employed by the metaphysician, for example, his disclosures can be confirmed and elaborated by other sciences which proceed more analytically.¹² Interestingly enough, Capek finds that this is precisely what happened relative to Bergson's own duration theory. In The Philosophical Impact of Contemporary Physics, Capek observes that Bergson's notion of duration, which is among the principal revelations of intuition, is supported in the main by the findings of quantum mechanics and relativity theory whose scientific methods are clearly more analytical than intuitive in nature.¹³ This reinforces Bergson's claim in the above passage that the insight provided by intuition can be substantiated and verified by the data of analysis.

The second principle of verification is fraught with even more serious problems than the first. One immediately is led to question whether unsubstantiated intuitions have any claim to truth, and whether the intuitive method has any independent value if its ideas require the further evidence of a non-intuitive methodology. Both of these

¹²Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 53-56, 60; Creative Mind, pp. 37-44, 124-26. Cf. Chevalier, Henri Bergson, pp. 110-13.

¹³Capek, The Philosophical Impact of Contemporary Physics, pp. 22, 286-87.

concerns, however, are overshadowed by the much more urgent and fundamental question of how two methodologies as different as intuition and intellectual analysis can ever arrive at the same truth.

Bergson argues that they can for two reasons. First, Bergson claims that science, proceeding by the analytic method, eventually will delve deeply enough into the material universe that matter will "surrender its inner structure," and science will reach the absolute reality of matter as it is in itself.¹⁴ However different their methods, Bergson maintains that science and metaphysics "will commune in experience."¹⁵ This statement is perplexing in the light of Bergson's basic epistemological assumption that different modes of knowing disclose fundamentally different worlds. Bergson has argued much more convincingly in our previous chapters, that our ability to see the world is structured by the point of view we assume in perception, as well as by the concepts through which we give the perceived world a logical form. What enables the intuitive mind to apprehend durée is precisely the fact that every stage of its method achieves a fluid and concrete grasp of its objects; what prohibits analysis from ever knowing duration as duration is its tendency, from the initial stage of perception onward,

¹⁴Bergson, Creative Mind, pp. 40-44.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 44.

to introduce spatial categories and thereby forfeit time. How then can metaphysics and science, whose view of the world is confined to the scope and purpose of their respective methods, ever "commune in experience?"

The second argument which Bergson offers on behalf of the complementarity of intuition and analysis is actually a reply to this objection. In an Introduction to Metaphysics, Bergson maintains that the common basis of an intuitive metaphysics and an analytical science is intuition itself. Analysis originates in a kind of primal intuition which it then formulates according to the perceptual and conceptual schemes of its distinctive methodology. As Bergson states, "the simple act which started the analysis, and which conceals itself behind the analysis, proceeds from a faculty quite different from the analytical. This is, by its very definition, intuition."¹⁶ If this is so, then Bergson must admit to a basic confusion regarding the nature of intuition. If intuitive insight precedes its conceptualization according to the analytical method rather than emerging in the process of it, then intuition must be a pre-reflective apprehension of the world which grounds all our reflection. What Bergson is suggesting here is that metaphysics and science are simply divergent responses to the same primitive intuition; their ability to commune with each other resides

¹⁶Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 60. Italics mine.

in the fact that their point of departure is the same.

In order to maintain this thesis, Bergson has to undermine his entire epistemology. One of the most obvious problems is his equivocal use of the term intuition. On the one hand, it refers to an elusive, pre-reflective insight, and on the other hand, it refers to an established method which formulates one's intuitive apprehensions on the level of reflection. Acceptance of the first meaning, while it saves Bergson's verification theory by accounting for the communicability of metaphysics and science, obviates the need for an intuitive method by providing, in advance, the same insight one would gain more laboriously by working through its formal procedures. This would undermine the distinction between analysis and intuition by stripping intuition of its methodological stages which, in turn, would entail the collapse of metaphysics or any philosophy which relies upon them. In conclusion, then, I would maintain that intuition is a method, not only because its definite stages are delineated by Bergson, but because it is the only interpretation of intuition which is truly viable within the context of Bergson's metaphysics and epistemology. Abandoning the theory that intuition is a pre-reflective apprehension of the world from which analysis begins, Bergson is unable to account for the fact that analysis can confirm the findings of intuition. Thus, according to Bergson's second principle of verification, intuition

remains unverifiable.

Final evaluation of Bergson's proposal that intuition be adopted as philosophic method must be tentative. I have argued that Bergson's theory of intuition does provide a methodology, and one which is tailored to the needs of the metaphysician as Bergson perceives them. Important questions remain, however, concerning the practicability of the method itself and concerning the adequacy of the verification procedures by which the truth of intuitive insights can be tested. These issues, being finally irresolvable within the Bergsonian corpus, bring the present study to an impasse. Although the operations and vocabulary of the intuitive method have been clarified in the preceding chapters, the implementation of the method and the verifiability of its claims cannot be firmly established. A philosopher's reluctance to employ the intuitive method would be well grounded in the fact that Bergson gives no satisfactory treatment to these most crucial concerns. Bergson's neglect in this regard casts a long shadow over one of his most original and at times most promising suggestions.

New Directions for Philosophic Discourse

Despite the problems which beset the intuitive method in general, the philosophy of expression which is an outgrowth of the intuitive theory has fertile implications for philosophic discourse. When Bergson recommends

that the philosopher employ intuition as a means of comprehending the world, it follows that the philosopher must express his intuitions in the only forms entirely adequate to them, namely, the linguistic, musical and artistic adaptations to the "fluid concept." Is the philosopher thereby constrained to use metaphorical language, to write a musical composition or to paint a picture in order to satisfactorily communicate his insight? Can a philosopher experiment with non-discursive forms of expression and retain the integrity of his discipline, or must philosophy properly so called remain within the bounds of the conventional semantic and logic of discursive language?

In this as in so many other contexts, Bergson's explicit comments are few. His theory of philosophic discourse exists only insofar as it can be drawn, by implication, from his theory of intuition and his philosophy of expression. Whether Bergson unequivocally endorses all non-discursive forms of expression as appropriate to philosophic discourse is difficult to say. However intriguing the suggestion that a philosopher could express his ideas in music or art, perhaps even more effectively than in language, the prospect of such a broad understanding of philosophic "discourse" presents numerous problems.

Although people often speak of the philosophic import of a piece of music or art, adopting these media as the principal vocabulary of philosophy would create problems

more serious than those they remedy. Despite their capabilities for expressing the fluidity and particularity of existing things more adequately than can discursive forms, music and art prove ill-suited to philosophic discourse. The reasons are several. First, what would be the difference between a musician or artist being philosophical and a philosopher being musical or artistic? If the difference between philosophy and these other forms is imperceptible or merely semantic, all three disciplines lose their autonomy, the identity of each is not enriched but dissolved. Second, the "vocabulary" of music and art is problematic. These forms convey a meaning not by literal description but by evocation; their mode is presentational, not argumentative. Thus, while ideas can be musically expressed with power and definiteness, they cannot be placed in the logical mold of premise and conclusion. While the forfeiture of these conveniences is compensated for by avoiding the many problems of discursiveness, it creates the further difficulty of devising a new methodology and reestablishing new criteria of truth. Third, since music and art resist literal translation, communicating their full import would be impossible outside the media themselves. To imagine philosophers debating musically or artistically is as ludicrous as it is impracticable. Closely related is the rather obvious problem that music and art are less accessible than language to the wider human community. If most people

communicate less readily and less well in these non-linguistic forms, then philosophy fosters an elitism by narrowing the range of its practitioners and of its audience.

These observations are designed to temper, not destroy, the rich implications of Bergson's aesthetics. To find music and art inappropriate to philosophic discourse is not to diminish or deny their effectiveness as expressive forms. Bergson's assessment of music and art as vital means of conveying the pure temporality and full particularity of existing things urges the philosopher to be receptive to their distinctive semantic, and to derive its insight as a valuable supplement to his own.

Language, whether spoken or written, has traditionally been the medium for the expression of philosophic thought. Its practical advantages over music and art are obvious. Language is an expressive form in which numerous ideas and subtle variations of thought and feeling can be communicated with considerable economy and precision, in a form that is accessible to a wide body of language users. What is less readily explained, however, is why discursive language has tended to dominate the philosophical vocabulary, while non-discursive or metaphorical uses have merely been tolerated, or even ignored. In the preface to his extensive study of metaphor, Max Black states the prejudice well: "To draw attention to a philosopher's metaphors is to belittle him—like praising a logician for his beautiful

handwriting. Addiction to metaphor is held to be illicit, on the principle that whereof one can speak only metaphorically, thereof one ought not to speak at all."¹⁷ Such prime offenders as Plato, Nietzsche and, of course Bergson himself, are usually pardoned for their lapses into metaphor only to the extent that their thought is bolstered by more sober, discursive prose.

As a theorist and practitioner of philosophy, Bergson challenges this long standing prejudice by proposing a mixed discourse, a blend of discursive and non-discursive forms. Bergson finds that the coexistence of these linguistic forms in a single discourse is purposive. In the context of Bergson's philosophy, discursive language has the advantage of providing literal descriptions of the world which, however logically coherent and amenable to verification, fail to grasp objects in their fluidity and concreteness. Non-discursive language, on the other hand, more adequately expresses the universal durée, and yet its metaphorical and unconventional forms cannot be analyzed and tested in discursive terms. Neither discursive nor non-discursive language alone can fulfill the philosopher's twofold aim: to describe and explain the world as it is, and yet to do so in a language that withstands logical scrutiny and analysis.

¹⁷Black, Models and Metaphors, p. 25.

Anyone who has read a substantial portion of Bergson's work cannot help but sense a pervasive tension between his strict adherence to straightforward discursive language and his more liberal tendency to rely upon metaphoric expressions to support and confirm his philosophic insights. This passage from Creative Evolution provides a clear example:

But evolution has actually taken place through millions of individuals, on divergent lines, each ending at a crossing from which new paths radiate, and so on indefinitely. If our hypothesis is justified . . . they must keep something in common in spite of the divergence of their effects, as school-fellows long separated keep the same memories of boyhood.¹⁸

Bergson's description of the unity which underlies the divergent lines of evolutionary progress is heightened by its metaphorical comparison to the bond of memories, which unify old school-fellows whose paths have long since diverged. Such interplay in Bergson's writings between discursive and non-discursive forms betrays not so much a conflict of interests, as an uneasiness with wholeheartedly adopting either conceptual scheme to the exclusion of the other.

This tendency to integrate rather than separate the two forms of language has its negative and positive aspects. Just as Bergson has difficulty in accounting for

¹⁸Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 61. Italics mine. Bergson's work is replete with similar examples. Sholom Kahn, in his article "Henri Bergson's Method," isolates several texts to illustrate the same point. (pp. 442-45)

the complementarity of the analytic and intuitive methods, so now he has failed to provide a grounding for the fact that their different languages can express the same truth. If discursive and non-discursive languages are untranslatable one into the other as we have consistently shown, then at most one can say they are expressing the same idea in different ways. The question remains, however, whether an idea expressed discursively or non-discursively is the same idea at all.¹⁹

Despite Bergson's inability to provide an adequate foundation for his mixed discourse, his recommendation also has a more positive side. It contains an implicit challenge to philosophers to broaden their conception of their own discourse. In addition to analyzing the syntactic and semantic structures of ordinary discursive language, philosophers are urged to become more attentive to the workings of metaphor, more adept at explicating the wealth of meaning it embodies and more proficient in its use.

By recommending to philosophy that it adopt the intuitive method, Bergson's objective is to extend and deepen our comprehension of a world that analysis, with its discursive forms, disfigures. Despite the problems which attend Bergson's theory of intuition, they should not obscure his basic insight, that a new conceptual scheme

¹⁹Cf. Chapter IV, pp. 128-30.

and a new "language" in which to express it can offer a more complete, more accurate and more incisive view of the world. Whatever the final verdict on the intuitive method, it has given rise to a reevaluation of expressive forms—urging the philosopher to be open to the semantic of the artist and musician, while encouraging his own exploration of the metaphorical uses of language. Bergson's philosophy of expression is the least developed, yet most visionary aspect of his thought. Therein he anticipates the concerns of contemporary philosophers in his early recognition of the urgent need for a revitalization of philosophic discourse.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Works by Bergson

Oeuvres. Textes annotés par André Robinet. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1970.

This is the most complete and reliable collection of Bergson's works. While it is our primary source for the French texts, except for Extraits de Lucrèce and Durée et simultanéité which it omits, the original editions of Bergson's major works are listed below. Both the French texts and their English translations appear in chronological order.

Extraits de Lucrèce, Avec une étude sur la poésie, la philosophie, la physique, le texte et la langue de Lucrèce. Paris: Delagrave, 1884.

Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience. Paris: Felix Alcan, 1889.

Matière et mémoire, Essai sur la relation du corps à l'esprit. Paris: Felix Alcan, 1896.

Le Rire, Essai sur la signification du comique. Paris: Felix Alcan, 1900.

L'Évolution créatrice. Paris: Felix Alcan, 1907.

L'Énergie spirituelle, Essais et conférences. Paris: Felix Alcan, 1919.

Durée et simultanéité. Paris: Felix Alcan, 1922.

Les Deux sources de la morale et de la religion. Paris: Felix Alcan, 1932.

La Pensée et le mouvant, Essais et conférences. Paris: Felix Alcan, 1934.

II. Translations of Bergson's Works

The Philosophy of Poetry: The Genius of Lucretius. Edited, translated and in part recast by Wade Baskin. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1959.

- Time and Free Will, An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness. Translated by F. L. Pogson. Harper Torchbooks. New York: Harper and Row, 1960.
- Matter and Memory. Translated by Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1959.
- Laughter, An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic. Translated by Cloudesley Brereton and Fred Rothwell. New York: Macmillan Co., 1937.
- An Introduction to Metaphysics. Translated by T. E. Hulme. The Library of Liberal Arts. New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1949.
- Creative Evolution. Translated by Arthur Mitchell. New York: Modern Library, 1914.
- Mind-Energy, Lectures and Essays. Translated by H. W. Carr. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1920.
- Duration and Simultaneity, With Reference to Einstein's Theory. Translated by Leon Jacobson. The Library of Liberal Arts. New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1965.
- The Two Sources of Morality and Religion. Translated by R. Ashley Audra and Cloudesley Brereton. Doubleday Anchor Books. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1935.
- A Study in Metaphysics: The Creative Mind. Translated by Mabelle L. Andison. The Philosophical Library. Totowa, N.J.: Littlefield, Adams and Co., 1970.

III. Works Relating to Bergson

- Actes du Congres des societes de langue francaise. Paris: A. Colin, 1959.
- Adolphe, Lydie. La dialectique des images chez Bergson. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1951.
- _____. L'univers bergsonien. Paris: Editions de la Colombe, 1955.
- Alexander, Ian Welsh. Bergson, Philosopher of Reflection. London: Bowes and Bowes, 1957.

- Arbour, Romero. Henri Bergson et les lettres francaises. Paris: Librairie Jose Corti, 1955.
- "Autour de Bergson." Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Etranger. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1955.
- Barreau, Herve. "Bergson et Zénon de'Elée: La conception Bergsonienne du mouvement et l'eléatisme." Revue Philosophique de Louvain, LXVII (May, August, 1969), 267-84, 389-430.
- Barthelemy-Madaule, Madeleine. Bergson. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1967.
- Bisson, L. A. "Proust, Bergson, Georges Elliot." The Modern Language Review, 1945.
- Black, Max. Models and Metaphors. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1962.
- Boas, George. "Bergson (1859-1941) and his predecessors." Journal of the History of Ideas, XX (1959), 503-14.
- Brincourt, Andre and Brincourt, Jean, Les oeuvres et les lumieres; A la recherche de l'esthétique à travers Bergson, Proust, Malraux. Paris: Les Editions de la Table Ronde, 1955.
- Brun, Jean. "Bergson, philosophe de la coincidence." Critique, XVI (1960), 535-52.
- Califano, Joseph J. "Bergson's Concept of Motion." Thomist, XXXIV (October, 1970), 555-67.
- Capek, Milic. Bergson and Modern Physics. Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science, Vol. VII. Dordrecht, Holland: Reidel, 1971.
- _____. "La genèse idéale de la matiers chez Bergson. La structure de la durée." Revue de Metaphysique et de Morale, LVII (1952), 325-48.
- _____. The Philosophical Impact of Contemporary Physics. Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1961.
- _____. "Stream of consciousness and 'durée réelle.'" Philosophic and Phenomenological Research, X (1950), 331-53.

- Carr, H. W. Henri Bergson. The Philosophy of Change. Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1970.
- Chahine, Osman E. La durée chez Bergson. Paris: H. Boucher, 1970.
- Chevalier, Jacques. Henri Bergson. Translated by Lilian A. Clare. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries, 1970.
- _____. Entretiens avec Bergson. Paris: Plon, 1959.
- Cresson, Andre. Bergson. Sa vie, son oeuvre, avec un exposé de sa philosophie. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1964.
- Cunningham, Gustavus Watts. A Study in the Philosophy of Bergson. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1916.
- Danto, Arthur. "Language, God and Reality in Nietzsche's Philosophy." Paper presented at Friedrich Nietzsche Conference, DePaul University, Chicago, November 24, 1972.
- Deleuze, Gilles. Le bergsonisme. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1966.
- Delhomme, Jeanne. Vie et conscience de la vie; Essai sur Bergson. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1954.
- Dewey, John. "Spencer et Bergson." Revue de Metaphysique et de Morale, LXX (1965), 325-33.
- Ebacher, Roger. "Existence historique et temporalité selon Bergson." Laval Théologique et Philosophique, XXV (1969), 208-33.
- _____. La philosophie dans la cité technique. Essai sur la philosophie bergsonienne des techniques. Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1968.
- Edie, James. "Expression and Metaphor." Philosophical and Phenomenological Research, XXIII (June 1963), 538-61.
- Elliot, Hugh Samuel Roger. Modern Science and the Illusions of Professor Bergson. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1912.
- The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 1st ed. S.v. "Metaphor," by Monroe C. Beardsley; "Time," by J. J. C. Smart.

Les Études bergsoniennes. 6 vols. Paris: A Michel, 1948.

Farber, Marvin, ed. Philosophic Thought in France and the United States. New York: University of Buffalo, 1950.

Fiser, Emeric. Le symbols litteraire; Essais sur la signification du symbole chez Wagner, Baudelaire, Mallarme, Bergson et Marcel Proust. Paris: Librairie José Corti, 1941.

Fressin, Augustin. Le perception chez Bergson et chez Merleau-Ponty. Paris: Societe d'edition d'enseignement superieur, 1967.

Gunn, John Alesander. Bergson and his Philosophy. London: Methueu and Co., 1920.

Guitton, Jean. La vocation de Bergson. Paris: Gallimard, 1960.

Gunter, Pete Addison. Bergson and the Evolution of Physics. Edited and Translated by P. A. Gunter. Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 1967.

_____. "Bergson's Reflective Anti-Intellectualism." Personalist, XLVII (1966), 43-60.

Hanna, Thomas, ed. The Bergsonian Heritage. New York: Columbia University Press, 1962.

Heidsieck, Francois. Henri Bergson et la notion d'espace. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1961.

"Hommage à Henri Bergson." Revue Internationale Philosophie, XIII (1959), 171-290.

Janicaud, Dominique. Une généalogie du spiritualisms francaise; aux sources du bergsonisme: Ravaïsson et la métaphysique. La Haye: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969.

Jankélévitch, Vladimir. Henri Bergson. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1959.

Jolas, Eugene. "The Revolution of Language and James Joyce." James Joyce, Finnegans Wake: A Symposium. New York: New Directions, 1929.

Kahn, S. J. "Henri Bergson's Method." Antioch Review, V (September, 1945), 440-51.

- Kallen, Horace Meyer. William James and Henri Bergson; A Study in Contrasting Theories of Life. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1914.
- Kumar, Shiv. "Bergson and Stephen Daedalus' Aesthetic Theory." Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, XVI (1957-58), 124-27.
- _____. Bergson and the Stream of Consciousness Novel. New York: New York University Press, 1963.
- LaFrance, Guy. "Continuité et absolue nouveauté dans la durée bergsonienne." Dialogue, VII (1968-69), 94-101.
- Langer, Susanne K. Feeling and Form. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953.
- _____. Philosophy in a New Key. Mentor Books. New York: The New American Library, 1942.
- _____. Problems of Art. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957.
- Lee, Harold N. "Bergson's Two Ways of Knowing." Tulane Studies in Philosophy, VIII (1959).
- LeRoy, E. E. J. The New Philosophy of Henri Bergson. Translated by Vincent Benson. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1913.
- Levi, Albert William. "Substance, Process, Being. A Whiteheadian-Bergsonian View." The Journal of Philosophy, LV (1958), 749-61.
- Lindsay, Alexander Dunlop. The Philosophy of Bergson. Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1968.
- MacLeish, Archibald. Poetry and Experience. Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1960.
- Marcel, Gabriel. "Bergsonisme et musique." La Revue Musicale, VI (March 1925), 219-29.
- Maritain, Jacques. Bergsonian Philosophy and Thomism. New York: Philosophical Library, 1955.
- May, William E. "The Reality of Matter in the Metaphysics of Bergson." International Philosophical Quarterly, X (1970), 611-42.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. Signs. Translated by Richard C. McCleary. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1964.

_____. L'union de l'ame et du corps chez Malebranche, Biran et Bergson. Notes prises a Jean Deprun au cours de Merleau-Ponty à l'École normale supérieure (1947-48). Paris: J. Vrin, 1968.

Mourellos, Georges. Bergson et les niveaux de realite. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1964.

Pariente, J. C. "Bergson and Wittgenstein." Revue Internationale de Philosophie, XXIII (1969), 183-204.

Piclin, Michel. "Bergson et la transcendence." Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Etranger, XCV (1970), 445-69.

Politzer, Georges. La fin d'une parade philosophique, le bergsonisme. Paris: J. J. Pauvert, 1967.

"Pour le centenaire de Bergson." Revue de Metaphysique et de Morale. LXIV (1959), 129-255.

Reck, Andrew. "Bergson's Theory of Duration." Tulane Studies in Philosophy, VIII (1959).

Riccaboni, Joseph J. "Bergson's Metaphysical Intuition and Science." Journal of the History of Philosophy, V (1967), 159-61.

Richards, I. A. The Philosophy of Rhetoric. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965.

Rideau, Emile. "Actualité de Bergson." Études, CCCXXVII (1967), 638-53.

_____. "Bergson aujourd'hui." Études, CCCII (1959), 3-23.

Robinet, Andre. Bergson et les métamorphoses de la durée. Paris: Éditions Seghers, 1965.

_____. "Le passage à la conception biologique. De la perception de l'image et du souvenir chez Bergson (Notes pour un commentaire du chapitre II de Matière et Mémoire)." Etudes Philosophiques, XV (1960), 375-88.

- Scharfstein, Ben-Ami. "Bergson and Merleau-Ponty: A Preliminary Comparison." Journal of Philosophy, LII (1955), 380-06.
- _____. Roots of Bergson's Philosophy. New York: Columbia University Press, 1914.
- Stephen, Karin. The Misuse of Mind; A Study of Bergson's Attack on Intellectualism. London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1922.
- Stewart, John. A Critical Exposition of Bergson's Philosophy. London: Macmillan and Co., 1911.
- Taminiaux, Jacques. "De Bergson à la phénoménologie existentielle." Revue Philosophique de Louvain, LIV (1956), 26-85.
- Theau, Jean. La critique bergsonienne du concept. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1968.
- Tremblay, Jacques. "La notion de philosophie chez Bergson." Laval Theologique et Philosophique, XIV (1958), 30-76.
- Trotignon, Pierre. L'idée de vie chez Bergson et la critique de la métaphysique. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1968.
- Turquet-Milnes, Gladys Rosaleen. Some Modern French Writers: A Study in Bergsonism. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries, 1968.
- Van Peursen, C. A. "Henri Bergson, phénoménologie de la perception." Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale, LXV (1960), 317-26.
- Vax, Louis. "Du bergsonisme à la philosophie première. Vladimir Jankelevitch." Critique, XI (1955), 36-53.
- Wahl, Jean. Bergson. Paris: Centre de documentation universitaire, 1965.
- Watanabe, Satosi. "The Concept of Time in Modern Physics and Bergson's Pure Duration." Bergson and the Evolution of Physics. Edited by P. A. Gunter. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1969.
- Wheelwright, Phillip. The Burning Fountain. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968.

Wheelwright, Philip. Metaphor and Reality. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1962.

Wolff, Edgard. "D'un progrès dialectique dans la pensée de Bergson: changement, mémoire, durée." Archives de Philosophie, XXII (1959), 521-28.

Zuckerandl, Victor. Sound and Symbol, Music and the External World. Translated by Willard Trask. New York: Pantheon Books, 1956.

APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Jeanne Priley McLean has been read and approved by the following Committee:

Dr. John F. Bannan, Chairman
Professor, Philosophy, Loyola

Dr. Robert Barry
Professor, Philosophy, Loyola

Dr. Thomas Wren
Associate Professor, Philosophy, Loyola

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Date

5/19/75

Director's Signature

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John F. Bannan", written over a horizontal line.